

The Bravery of Iowans in  
Storming of Chapultepec

THE  
**ANNALS OF IOWA**

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OCTOBER, 1946

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY THE  
**IOWA STATE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
AND ARCHIVES**  
DES MOINES, IOWA

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## THE ANNALS OF IOWA

In the more than half a century THE ANNALS OF IOWA has been published, it has made available to the people generally a vast amount of interesting and accurate data on the history of the State that otherwise would not have been accessible. The securing of material, and editing and supervising its publication, is a part of the immediate task of carrying on the work of the Department in harmony with its well established traditions. The Editor welcomes for publication the contribution of the reminiscences, the writings, the biographies, observations and studies of those familiar with Iowa people and with important and significant events and movements in the state's history.

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A MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

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ORA WILLIAMS, Curator

EMORY H. ENGLISH, Assistant Curator

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# ANNALS OF IOWA

ORA WILLIAMS, Editor

EMORY H. ENGLISH, Associate Editor

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From the Original Painting by Powell

## STORMING OF CHAPULTEPEC



# ANNALS OF IOWA

ESTABLISHED 1863

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VOL. XXVIII, No. 2      DES MOINES, OCTOBER, 1946      THIRD SERIES

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## FORGETTING CHAPULTEPEC

By ORA WILLIAMS

One hundred years ago on a drowsy summer day for Iowa a small group of men and boys loitering on the rough dock below the Flint hills watched a packet pull away on the up-journey to Galena. The hoarse blast that had called for full speed ahead had hardly been lost in the echoes when the attention of the idlers was called to a commotion in the court yard. A new excitement had appeared.

That hour was the commencement of a story of adventure and heroism that culminated in an Iowa man<sup>1</sup> carrying the flag of his country from the great fortress of Chapultepec into the capital of a conquered nation, an event that might well be a part of Iowa's joyous Centennial celebration in this anniversary year of 1946.

We are forgetting Chapultepec.

Our ears are attuned to the strident raspings from Hollywood, unmindful of the historic fact that but for Chapultepec the site of Hollywood might still be only the playground of a Mexican ranchero. Even in the old days there were those who wanted to forget Chapultepec. A newspaper scribbler set America afire with a suggestion that "manifest destiny" would compel the United

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<sup>1</sup>Benjamin Stone Roberts, born in Vermont 1811 and graduated from West Point 1835; came to Iowa and became adjutant at old Fort Des Moines; resigned and became railroad engineer in New York and assistant state geologist; was invited to help railroad construction in Russia but declined; came back to Iowa, practiced law at Fort Madison and was an officer in territorial militia; joined a mounted rifle regiment and went to Mexico where he distinguished himself at various places; was assigned by General Scott to raise the United States flag over the capitol of Mexico; was voted a sword by the General Assembly of Iowa; received a commission as major in the War of the Rebellion, performed military duty at a number of important places and became brigadier general of volunteers; remained with the regular army until 1870, and died at Washington Jan. 29, 1875. He also was two years professor of tactics at Yale university.

States to expand even to the cold mountains that had not revealed their gold. The boys playing at the Burlington water front thought of the Skunk river bottoms as "out west." Time plays havoc with ideas and ideals.

The summer had promised to be dull in the ambitious little city that had been seat of government for two territories that extended to nobody knew where. The territorial capital had been moved nearer to the Indian country, but the governor still kept his executive office close to his newspaper editorial sanctum. The knowing ones were already saying the capital would be moved over into the central valley now that statehood was a certainty.

The fussing about details of statehood would come to an end early in August when the matter would be clinched by a vote on the patched up Constitution of May. The compromisers had for once compromised on what was right. Iowa would be a free state. Florida had already come in as a slave state. The promise had been to divide Texas up into four states or more, if needed to make sure of the dominance of the slavery group at Washington. The administration of the crafty Tyler had come to an inglorious end. The pompous Tennessean, Mr. Polk, was looking for a chance to achieve glory. River traffic was good clear to St. Anthony's Falls. It was certain that salaries in the new state would not attract greedy men to state or local offices. There would be a little scramble for congressional honors. On the whole it was a quiet spring time in Iowa.

The commotion in the court yard commenced when a man tacked to the south front door a handbill that had been freshly run off at the local print shop. It bore the signature of the governor and his secretary. It was an official proclamation with fighting words. Some there were who gave a whoop of joy as they read it; others turned away in dismay. But the handbill dissi-



pated the summer stillness of a June day on the river front.

Men were wanted from Iowa to reinforce the regular army and help chastise Mexico for something or other. The call was for a regiment, ten companies, and privates should be "in years apparently not over forty-five or under eighteen." That gave considerable leeway in the matter of enlistments. The description would fit a good many men and boys who knew how to hit a squirrel at fifty yards. Enlistments were to be for a year or until the war "now existing" came to an end.

"The President," so ran the proclamation, "in thus offering us an opportunity of participating in the danger and glory of inflicting merited chastisement upon the invaders of our soil, has, I am confident, but anticipated the wishes of the great body of our people."

That settled it. There had been invasion of "our soil," so Pres. James K. Polk says. James Clarke, fellow townsman, editor and now governor, also says so, and Jesse Williams, territorial secretary added his signature. No need to ask questions. What mattered it if Congressman Abe Lincoln had asked embarrassing questions about what particular spot of "our soil" had been trampled on by the Mexicans! The moment's flurry among the big-wigs at Washington did not change the fact. Iowa had Gen. Augustus Caesar Dodge on guard at the national capital. The territorial governor had married into the same "Dodge dynasty." If there were explanations to be made they could furnish them later. Nobody in Iowa knew very much about Mexico, nor how to get there, but they were ready to start.

The first shock of the proclamation caused varying emotions. One man recalled how his father helped take in a bunch of tipsy Hessians at Trenton. Another had heard about the terrible suffering at Valley Forge. One had been in line at Lundy's Lane and lost a leg. The American republic was seventy years old and had fought

two wars for independence. Why bother about Mexico? Yet, someone whispered, "Remember the Alamo," and recall what they did to Davy Crockett. There had been some disagreement about a strip of cactus land and Gen. Santa Anna had been brought back home supposedly to start something. The Texas that had been a hopeful nation several years had taken refuge under the stars and stripes. Now "our soil" had been invaded.

#### PUZZLED OVER THE MEXICAN QUARREL

There were those who hinted that the fuss might mean more than control of a strip of desert land and a string of missions running up to the highlands. Far beyond lay California and Oregon. But the crowd that milled about the handbill could settle nothing and only argue. A bumptious Whig and belligerent Democrat nearly broke down the hitching rack in their argument. A boy shouted "Hooray for General Jackson." A fisherman passed that way and asked whether Mexico was a river or a town. There would be other meetings held, some in the office of Judge David Rorer, whose judgment was always good, and others, perhaps, in the newspaper office where the governor still had a desk.

The sudden disclosure that a state of war actually existed was not to disturb business, they all agreed, for the real fighting would be a long way off. The feverish land speculation would go on, and the eager search for homes would not be halted. Every packet from St. Genevieve or below unloaded a family or two. Boats from Wheeling to the falls were said to be crowded. Merchants were selling breaking-plows and broad-axes. All roads from the river towns to the flowered valleys of the Iowa, the Skunk and the Des Moines were heavy with dust or mud. The last of the Indians had been sent off to Kansas except a few in the west or north.

A full regiment was wanted from Iowa. That was ten companies. They were to be equipped as regulars, and they would get money to buy clothing. A recruiting

officer would come and swear them in as quickly as possible. The language of the proclamation was strong. Among other things it stated:

The President of the United States, under a law enacted at the present session of congress authorizing him to accept the services of fifty thousand volunteers to serve in the war now existing between Mexico and the United States, having made a requisition upon me, as Executive of the Territory, for the enrollment of one regiment of Infantry, to be mustered into service at such times as may be required, I hereby proclaim the fact to the citizen soldiery of Iowa, not doubting that they will respond to the call with the utmost alacrity and promptness.

It is due to the character of our territory and its inhabitants that the requisition be at once met by voluntary enlistment, and that it will be so met I have entire confidence. To insure this result, I recommend that active, efficient, and immediate steps be taken in the several counties of the territory to procure the enrollment, in good faith, of all who may be disposed to tender their services to their country, a report of the result to be transmitted to me at the earliest possible day. The aid of all good citizens—all lovers of their country—is invoked, and calculated on; and it is especially enjoined that on all officers holding military commissions that they be active and vigilant in their efforts to assist in raising the force called for by the president.

There was no mistaking the language. The man who stood on the top step and read aloud the handbill emphasized the "all lovers of their country."

These Iowa men were familiar with gold braid and clanging swords. Governor Lucas had seen service with Jackson and Governor Chambers had fought with Harrison. The latter pleaded age for not accepting command of the Iowa regiment. Then there were such men as Albert Lea, Atkinson, Allen, Greer, Boone, Gardiner and others. Stephen Kearny had orders to organize the Mormon battalion. Zachary Taylor, whose only licking was in boats and in sight of Iowa, was on his way to Texas. U. S. Grant, who had bought hides and hogs in Iowa, was getting ready, and so was Robert E. Lee, who had made reports on the Des Moines rapids. Winfield Scott, who directed the first land deal in Iowa, had his sword all polished. They had some sort of an organized



militia in the territory and James McGowan Morgan was at the head. He had picked up some legal learning in the office of "Old Bullion," Benton of Missouri, and had been in the territorial legislature. Then there was George Washington Bowie who had been active in the constitutional convention. Another of stout heart was Frederick D. Mills<sup>2</sup>, who had joined with Eastman and Parvin in the fight to make Iowa boundaries right. Perhaps at some of the meetings they called in for consultation, Dr. William Salter, of the Iowa band. At Fort Madison there was Isaac W. Griffith<sup>3</sup> and Benjamin Stone Roberts chafing to get into the fray. At up river points there was also great excitement as soon as the handbills appeared.

#### ALL READY AND NO PLACE TO GO

Only a day or two later the governor was embarrassed by the offer of a dozen companies: Des Moines county 2, Lee county 2, Van Buren 2, and one each in Muscatine, Washington, Louisa, Linn, Johnson and Dubuque. Then there was a hitch of some kind and delay and the Iowa regiment as such was never organized. After all Iowa was a territory and had no vote in congress.

The call for an Iowa regiment was dated June 1, 1846, but on Nov. 25, Governor Clarke received this word from William L. Marcy secretary of war:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's letter of the 19th instant, stating that the regiment of Iowa volunteers are anxious to be called into active service, and to inform you that their patriotic wishes cannot now be gratified consistently with the claims of other states.

There was much disappointment. Hot words were bandied about, in fact so hot that they appear to have been burned and no copies kept. Governor Clarke was indignant. Delegate Dodge pounded the desk at the army

<sup>2</sup>Frederick D. Mills was a lawyer of Burlington, and was one of a small group who made the successful fight to defeat acceptance by Iowa of the reduced boundary lines fixed by congress. He was appointed by President Polk a major in the U. S. army March 3, 1847, and assigned to duty with the Fifteenth infantry. He was killed in battle at or near Churubusco Aug. 20, 1847, while leading a charge into the very ranks of the Mexican army.

office. The boys on the river front used some swear words. The frontier military spirit was not to be entirely smothered by the claims of other states. Withdrawal of the regulars from Ft. Atkinson encouraged the Winnebagoes on the neutral strip to become restless, James Morgan got authority to head a company of infantry to do police duty. They served from July to November. In September, James Parker came with a company of dragoons to help, but nearly all of Morgan's men re-enlisted into a company of mounted volunteers. But there were no Mexicans to fight on the neutral strip.

Men good and true served in these companies, organized to go to Mexico, but sent to watch Indians. For instance there was Elias Williams, a private, who became supreme judge; John McKenney, editor and sheriff of Des Moines county; David Wilson, state senator and of the *Miner's Express* at Dubuque; David Olmsted, first mayor of the city of St. Paul, Minn.; Dudley Williams, railroad promoter and last survivor of the companies; Thomas Cox, Jr., son of a prominent member of the general assembly; and a number who later served in the War of the Rebellion, some on one side and some on the other.

#### MORMON BATTALION ORGANIZED IN IOWA

A large number of Iowa men were not to be denied the opportunity for high adventure. General Kearny who had been at old Fort Des Moines, on the Mississippi river, and the second Fort Des Moines at the Raccoon forks, now being abandoned, wanted men to go with him by the southern route to California, and induced the secretary of war to authorize enlistment of a whole battalion for that purpose in Iowa. Capt. James Allen, who had been in command at the Raccoon forks was assigned to go to Kanesville, or Council Bluffs, and make an offer to the Mormons who were anxious to go west. Later he enlisted nearly 500 of them and set out from Fort Leavenworth. Allen died after a few days out, but the Mormon battalion, organized in Iowa, went

through to California to find no fighting to do since all of the Pacific coast had been taken by the navy and the army. The battalion boys remained in the west and joined their families and friends. But it remains a fact that the largest single body of troops sent into the Mexican war, aside from the regulars, was composed of Iowa men.

Just why and how all this jockeying and fumbling occurred was probably never known to the Iowa men. The policing job in northeast Iowa was distasteful to men who had enlisted for a foreign war. Some Iowa men took the short cut and did really get into the war with Mexico. Most prominent among these was Frederick D. Mills<sup>2</sup>, Burlington lawyer and political leader, who managed somehow to get from President Polk a commission in the regular army as a major and authority to do something about the slight to Iowa. He had been captain of the first company raised and offered. So Major Mills got his volunteers together and in due time they set off for New Orleans by boat from Fort Madison.

As Company D this bunch of Iowa volunteers was attached to the Fifteenth United States Infantry and in due time it landed at Vera Cruz where General Scott was preparing to climb the hills and go direct to the ancient capital. General Taylor could keep watch on the Rio Grande. The real victory was to be won in the high country. Company D, from Iowa, was pushed right to the front. It lost 40 per cent of its membership in battle, Major Mills lost his life at the front, and Iowa named a county in his honor. Edwin Guthrie, of Fort Madison, the captain, also gave his life. Isaac Griffith<sup>3</sup> left an arm on the battlefield of Churubusco.

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<sup>2</sup>Isaac W. Griffith, "Old Churubusco" to many Des Moines friends; born in Ohio 1820; removed to Lee county, Iowa, 1838; then came a most remarkable and varied career—served as a lieutenant in the border war with Missouri 1839; justice of the peace and coroner in Lee county; captain in the territorial militia; went to Mexico with General Scott as corporal in the 15th U. S. infantry; lost his right arm at Churubusco, but went on into Mexico; member of Iowa General Assembly and introduced the Iowa homestead exemption bill; served as deputy sheriff, assistant doorkeeper U. S. senate, registrar of the U. S. land office at Des Moines, sheriff of Polk county, in quartermaster department and U. S. marshal in Tennessee, bailiff Iowa supreme court, tollkeeper at bridge in Des Moines eighteen years and coroner of Polk county twenty years. Died January 27, 1897.



## IOWAN CARRIES FLAG TO MEXICAN CAPITAL

Among the Iowa men who got into the regular army was Benjamin S. Roberts<sup>1</sup>, of Fort Madison. He had been commissioned by the president to be a lieutenant and was assigned to duty with a regiment of mounted riflemen. He was given the rank of captain and then of lieutenant colonel. He lived to be brigadier general of volunteers in the war fifteen years later.

Was the work done by Iowa men merely for "honor and glory" as Governor Clarke had said in his proclamation? The record shows otherwise. A half hundred never returned to their homes but some of the men did and were held in high esteem.

There was honor, however, for history makes record of the fact that it was an Iowa soldier who carried the stars and stripes into the City of Mexico over the ramparts or whatever they had and his feat was recognized. In General Scott's report of how he got the American army into Mexico City he wrote of Ben Roberts, of Fort Madison, as follows:

Captain Roberts of the mounted rifle regiment, who had greatly distinguished himself on the preceding day in leading the advance company of the storming party at Chapultepec, was selected by me, to plant the national flag on the capitol.

Some time later, while Captain Roberts was out of the state he was presented, as the gift of the state of Iowa, by authority of the General Assembly, a sword on which these words were inscribed and the names of ten battles in which he had participated. The name of Chapultepec was on the list. The Iowa of 1850 did not forget. The war was denounced and avoided by the Whigs of the time and for years afterwards; but when there was fighting to be done, the pioneers who brought their long rifles with them did what seemed to them to be a patriotic duty.

Chapultepec was a fortress guarding the entrance to the City of Mexico. General Santa Anna, who after he had been brought back by the United States from exile

assumed command, relied upon it to save the capital. General Scott had arrived at Vera Cruz by sea and had taken Churubusco in a hard battle. With a small army he moved direct to Chapultepec and took the place. This virtually closed the war. He soon entered the capital city. As he stated in his order, he sent an Iowa soldier with the American flag to plant it inside the City of Mexico. A year or so later a treaty was made and a vast western empire was added to the United States. The march from Vera Cruz to Mexico City was one of the most brilliant achievements of American arms.

#### REUNION OF SIXTY YEARS AGO

Until a comparatively few years ago, so it seems, there was much vivid remembering of Chapultepec. However slow their steps might be the veterans of the Mexican war had good memories and strong voices. They had a national association and an Iowa association. One of the last great reunions was held in Des Moines in 1886. It was a colorful event. There was an enrollment of probably 250, representing a dozen states. They had a parade after the fashion of the day, good speaking at several meetings, songs and band music, and a banquet with the usual line of toasts and responses. There was a fine address of welcome by John Scott who had been lieutenant governor. Mayor J. H. Phillips extended the kind hand. Gov. William Larrabee extolled the work of the soldiers. It was reported that the national association had nearly 500 members. This was forty years after the march from Vera Cruz. A flag was presented to the organization making the best showing in attendance. It was noted that two Iowa men, Micah French and David Norris, were in attendance who had served in the War of 1812.

These Mexican war men had no controversy over who was entitled to greatest honor. By the lapse of time many had become "General" or "Colonel," but all were on a level at the camp fires and banquets. Conspicuous

was Gen. J. W. Denver, an Ohio congressman, who was national president. From Indiana came Generals McFaden, Ogg and Manson. The Iowa association elected Col. W. T. Shaw president. The real head of the local committee of arrangements was Gen. Josiah Given<sup>4</sup>, who had tried to get into the regular army as a drummer boy but later joined an Ohio regiment. Others of the committee were M. B. Priestley and T. J. Kennedy. A conspicuous figure was "Old Churubusco," as we called him, Isaac W. Griffith<sup>3</sup>, he who had hurried into the war from Fort Madison, and we elected him coronor many times. An Indiana man wore a sombrero taken from Gen. Santa Anna.

These men were remembering Chapultepec, Churubusco and Buena Vista, where they upheld the national honor at the rate of pay of seven dollars a month.

The surviving veterans were to be reminded of some things of national and world import about their short but sharp war. Governor Larrabee spoke out clearly and among other things said:

While we look back with pride to the deeds of our army during the war with Mexico, and while we now gratefully acknowledge the benefits which we derived from the successful termination of that contest, we cannot in the light of history close our eyes to the fact that the war commenced in the interest of southern supremacy and the institution of slavery, and that it was a war for conquest rather than one for principle; but, as the wisdom of Almighty God frequently turns the designs of evil thinking men into agencies for good, so proved this war; designed to extend the fetters of bondage over millions yet unborn, it proved the means of scattering the benefits of civilization over a territory almost as large as that of the thirteen original states of the union.

Perhaps that was one reason why there has been much forgetting of Chapultepec. But there was another angle

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<sup>4</sup>Josiah Given, born in Pennsylvania in 1828 and helped in his father's blacksmith shop in Ohio; enlisted as drummer boy for service in the Mexican war; later got in as corporal in an Ohio company and went to Mexico; became prosecuting attorney in Holmes county; on outbreak of civil war he organized Co. K, 24th Ohio infantry and as colonel went through the Atlanta campaign; was postmaster for Congress and deputy internal revenue collector; elected district attorney at Des Moines; representative from Polk county; elected circuit court judge; elected district judge; appointed and elected to the supreme court; died in Des Moines Feb. 3, 1908.



to the contest. It was stated thus by Gov. John Scott:

Hitherto the great powers, the leading nations of Europe, had held our militia in supreme contempt. They had been weighed down with vast armies, and believed that education and habit were necessary to the successful conduct of a war. They were astounded when they found the farm, the workshop, the manufactory, the counting room of the merchant, and the desk of the banker, as well as the liberal professions, turn out in the twinkling of an eye hundreds of thousands who asked the honor of following "the old flag" to the field of battle.

The war was a short one. The regular United States army was small. The fighting was largely done by fresh volunteers. Colonel Mills<sup>2</sup>, of Iowa, who lost his life on the campaign to take Chapultepec had been at the desk of his law office in Iowa only six months before. In May 1846 General Roberts of Fort Madison received a commission as lieutenant and little more than a year later he carried the stars and stripes into Mexico City.

The meeting of these veterans of the Mexican war from Iowa and other states, on August 20, 1886, practically marked the close of their social and patriotic events. The writer made report for the leading daily paper of Des Moines of their proceedings and came into close contact with many of them, and well recalls their unbounded enthusiasm and hearty show of mutual friendship. In the intervening sixty years we have done a lot of forgetting, but they who fought with Scott and Taylor and Kearny never offered apologies for their part in repulsing the enemy that had dared to invade our soil.

# RECOLLECTIONS OF A PIONEER TEACHER OF HAMILTON COUNTY

By AGNES BRIGGS OLMSTEAD

The stranger at my fireside cannot see the forms I see,  
Nor hear the sounds I hear;  
He but perceives what is, while to me all that has been  
Is visible and clear.

—Longfellow.

When my ever staunch friend, editor Charles Aldrich,<sup>1</sup> urged me to write for the ANNALS something of the recollections of a pioneer schoolteacher, he evidently considered my experiences more varied and full of incident than they really were. Being only a country school-ma'am, to strangers, such a retrospection must necessarily be commonplace; while to me, these memories are so large a part of heart and life, that aside from them there is scarce anything left.

Hamilton county, in which most of my teaching was done, had almost passed the pioneer stage and the much vaunted days of log schoolhouses with puncheon floors and shake roofs were over long before I entered the lists as a teacher. True, when first we came to this county in 1858, I did attend school in such a structure. The following summer it was removed, and just such a neat, white, frame building took its place as now dots the center of nearly every school-district in Iowa.

<sup>1</sup>These recollections were written in 1902 or 1903 for THE ANNALS OF IOWA, at the request of the late Charles Aldrich, then editor, by Agnes Briggs, a pioneer school teacher of Hamilton county, Iowa. The original manuscript was revised and edited in April 1946 by Ethel B. Virtue, of Webster City. Miss Briggs was the daughter of Ulysses and Ellen Briggs and was born near Pittsburg, Penn., Aug. 12, 1848. She came west with her parents to Jackson and Dubuque counties, Iowa, and then to Cass township in Hamilton county in 1856. About 1866 the family removed to Boone township where the permanent Briggs home was built in what is now known as Briggs Woods.

She was the second child in a family of eight children and herself attended a pioneer country school in Cass township but began her teaching career in Boone township in 1867 at the age of nineteen. This continued to be her profession until her marriage to a young attorney, George C. Olmstead, on October 22, 1885. Her death occurred at the Briggs farm home on October 17, 1911 at the age of sixty-three years.

As a teacher she was ever respected and admired by her pupils, who still think of her as an outstanding influence in their youth. She was widely known over the county as a good speaker and writer, who was particularly well versed in the classics. Her private library was considered one of the finest collections of choice volumes to be found in this section of the state.

But even this uncouth log schoolhouse has its memory, for here was held the only Sabbath service in Cass township, and hither once in two weeks, came a young minister, the Rev. O. A. Holmes<sup>2</sup> of Webster City, to break the bread of life to a little handful of pioneers.

The first time I saw him in the pulpit (?) he wore a large check, black and white coat that made him much resemble an animated checkerboard, and he was barefoot. I failed to understand the fineness of the action then; had I been older, I should have recognized a hero fitted to become what he afterwards was—one of the best beloved and prominent ministers of the Baptist church in Iowa.

It was a lovely morning in early May, 1867, when, leaving my woodland home on the banks of the Boone, I set out on the long walk that was the beginning of a new era in my life. Hitherto I had been as a child to be taught and led; now I was to assume the responsibility of teacher and guide to others. I had no forebodings of failure nor bright visions of success. I simply planned to do with my whole might the duty that lay nearest my hand. Before me lay a broad stretch of undulating prairie, seared and blackened by the fires that had swept over it. I might almost speak of it as a trackless waste, as for the greater part of the way, there was no wagon track nor even a footpath until one was worn by my own feet.

At this time there was not one enclosed farm on the south side of my road, though there were two on the north. Seven prairie creeks intersected my path and as

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<sup>2</sup>Rev. O. A. Holmes was one of the leading and most successful Baptist preachers of the state in the early days. He organized dozens of churches in Iowa and other western states. Among these were the churches at Webster City, Iowa Falls, Fort Dodge and Boone. He was pastor of the Webster City church from 1858 to 1867.

<sup>3</sup>The Hunt school was located out on the prairies about five miles east and a little south of the Briggs home. The remains of the foundation of the home of John Hunt, the school director, may still be seen across the road north from the farm home of John H. Tapper who lives north and east of Kamrar. Across the fields north and west about a half mile is the site of the so-called Hunt school.

John Hunt came to this county in 1864 with his wife and three daughters, Hulda, Jessie, and Doretha. Hulda died in early youth, Jessie in 1910, Doretha in 1936 after many years of service as recorder of Hamilton county.



many times were my "hosen and shoon" removed to wade across them. They were usually from one to two feet in depth, and if I remember rightly, there was no time during that summer when any of them were low enough to cross dry-shod. Once or twice however after heavy rains I have unexpectedly plunged in chin-deep. There was no current, however, so I was in no danger of drowning.

I was to teach what was known as the Hunt school,<sup>3</sup> five miles east from my home, and here I arrived about half past eight, thoroughly tired out with my toilsome walk. The school house was one of the neatest, littlest structures in which I have ever been privileged to teach—"perfect and entire and clean" inside and out. Three pupils, daughters of the school director, awaited me. They proved to be the most docile and willing of pupils, and during the two years that I remained there, I cannot recall that they ever gave me a moment's pain or annoyance.

The settlement appeared to consist of two families. At least, there were just two dwellings that I could see as I took a survey of my surroundings. At one of these places I was to board and about six o'clock I slowly wended my way in that direction.

The house was a low, weather-beaten structure consisting of a front-room and a back-kitchen. Each of the two rooms was occupied by a separate family. I boarded with the front-room family which comprised an old man and his wife, a small son and a hired girl. I was to stay with them four days out of each week and pay them three dollars, with twenty-five cents less if I drank neither tea nor coffee. As this was but a little more than half of my salary, I considered the price reasonable and so the bargain was settled. Our bill of fare, embracing just five articles, was made out according to the laws of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not.

I did not object to this but there were "some of the customs o' the family" that I did object to most decidedly

and after sixteen days of trying to adjust myself to the living conditions of this household, I finally came to myself and said: "I will arise and go to my father's house." And so, for the remainder of the time I walked the five miles back and forth between my home and the school daily.

I was often very, very tired and at times my feet almost refused to bear me further and wading creeks grew monotonous. In the moist places the grass grew so tall that the bending tops met over my head, shutting out the sunlight. The hard rough leaves at the base of the stems would cut into my bare limbs, until I could not place a finger-tip from knee to toe, where the blood had not started. I used to feel sorry for myself as I watched the crimson drops slowly trickling down and perhaps cry a little.<sup>4</sup>

And yet I would rather have paid the price it cost me than be deprived of the memory of those long walks. The real delight and satisfaction in them will be to me a joy forever.

#### COMPANIONSHIP WITH NATURE

Not the least of my pleasure was the sense of boundless freedom, of being no longer shut in. Here was elbow room, breathing space; above, the vast blue canopy of heaven; beneath, a deep gulf of billow verdure, and the great glad sun pouring its radiance over all and everything so clean, so pure, so fresh.

Many a time, as I walked in the early morning, I watched the darkness dissolve into dawn while the stars, like weary watchers, drowsily closed their eyes. I have seen the sun rise from a cloudy bed of amethyst and gold; noted the changing landscape as it was gradually revealed in the growing light. Many a glorious sunset have I seen and how often caught the first shy glance of the evening-star. I have traced many a meteor along its fiery pathway, until it seemed to fall to earth shattered

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<sup>4</sup>Among the tall grasses mentioned was the prairie blue stem, which grew to a great height on the open prairie and had a coarse rough stalk.

into a thousand burning fragments. I have even seen the Aurora Borealis drape the whole sky from zenith to horizon, with fold on fold of soft, shimmering curtains of rose and gold.

I kept a calendar for bud and flower and leaf, until they seemed to come and go as I announced the days. Morning after morning, ever with the same delight, I have listened to the matins of the meadow-lark as he celebrated earth's glory. In the evening I have waited to hear the bobolink chant his vespers and then when all the birds together sang their song of jubilee, I was present.

But birds were not my only companions. Occasionally I would see a fox trotting along. Sometimes a solitary wolf would suddenly emerge from the tall grass near my path and, after eyeing me for a moment, beat a hasty retreat with a look of intense disgust on his face. In the early winter, when more than half of my daily journey was made in the dark, I could hear the wolves barking raggedly and howling like demons as they ranged the desolate prairies, as if pandemonium were let loose.

Snakes were most abundant, principally the harmless varieties. Hurrying along one evening, I suddenly came upon the enormous body of one lying squarely across my path. Though I passed cautiously along until about five feet of his snakeship had passed under review, he never moved. As I had not the faintest idea where either extremity might be located, I made a circuit of a quarter of a mile in order to avoid disturbing him.

Another time I came a little nearer meeting with a dangerous adventure. It was on the evening of an intensely warm day in July. I had walked about two miles, was hungry, thirsty, and numb with weariness. Hardly conscious of what I was doing, I dropped down by the roadside to rest a minute. In a moment my head had dropped forward and I was asleep. I must have slept an hour when I awoke with a start. Quickly gathering myself together, I started to descend the little



slope bordering a creek, when I noticed a swaying of the tall grass on my right. "There's a snake there if I am not mistaken," I thought, "and from the motion of the grass, he must be immense, and well worth seeing. I think I'll find out." Cautiously I pushed aside the grass, and there facing me, with very few feet of space between us, was the handsomest reptile I have ever seen—a lovely azure blue, with large calm eyes of black and gold that betrayed neither alarm nor hostility as they met mine. Some three feet of his graceful length emerged from the dense growth and lay half reclining on the recumbent stalks of grass. His head was raised about two feet from the ground. He was so perfectly beautiful I could not take my eyes away. Suddenly he made a spring. The shock was terrible, but, quick as he was, I was quicker and with one great leap I cleared the slope and fairly flew over the next half mile. I had heard of blue racers before but had never seen one. And I had no mind to try the tender embraces of this one.

The oddest part of the adventure was yet to come. Twilight was deepening into dusk and I was nearing home when my sister, Thirza, unexpectedly appeared in my path. "O," she cried, "what has been the matter with you? What trouble have you met with?"

"None at all," I replied, "I've had no trouble."

"Then why did you call?" she asked.

"I didn't call, and everything has been remarkably still. I've scarcely heard a sound but the chirp of a grasshopper."

"But you did call. We all heard you. Three times the call came, distinct and clear. It was your voice and you spoke my name as no one outside the family ever speaks it." We never knew who called that night, but I have a vague impression that my curiosity came near costing me dear—but that snake was a handsome fellow.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Frank Briggs, a brother of Agnes and at this time a small boy of five years, remembers this incident well. He recalls that the cry of his sister was distinctly heard by several members of the family.

Another evening I came across an enormous geometric spider. I never saw a finer specimen. The body as nearly as I could measure it with my eye, was two and a half inches in length, while the legs had a span of eight inches or more. The cephalo-thorax was a vivid yellow, bright as the petal of a buttercup; the abdomen was striped with alternate velvety bands of jet black and snow white. She was balanced in the center of a magnificent web some four feet square attached to two tall stalks of compass plant or gum weed. As I stood watching, a heedless katydid landed in the lower edge of the snare. Like a flash the spider swooped down upon her helpless victim, and in a moment it was so firmly bound, wing and foot, that further struggle was impossible. When I returned on Monday morning both queen spider and palace had alike disappeared.

#### FIRM FRIENDSHIPS ESTABLISHED

But all the time I was growing familiar with these wild creatures, I was making human acquaintances as well. Among the earliest and truest of these were the members of the Hunt family. As Mr. Hunt was the director and for a time, the daughters, my only pupils, I was soon on friendly footing with them all. Thus early began a friendship, which, for thirty years, has continued without change. They were unique. Each was a strong and decided character, reminding me in many ways of the old New England Puritans. Husband and wife were one in struggle and aspiration, one in sympathy and burden bearing, and the daughters accorded them a trustful and loyal devotion, beautiful to see.

If ever a man was fashioned to pioneer a forlorn hope, or live wholly within his own resources, that was John Hunt. Firm of purpose, energetic and persevering and possessed of remarkable mechanical ingenuity, he was a whole colony of mechanics and trades people within himself. Few indeed were the needs of the average pioneer family which his industry and skill could not supply.<sup>3</sup>

Their own farm produced the flax which, woven in their own loom, furnished table linen, bedding, towelling, and underwear. Wool used for winter clothing was raised, spun and woven in the home. If shoes were needed, Mr. Hunt would don his leather apron and shape a shoe but little inferior in appearance to a factory made article and far superior in durability.

A small blacksmith shop stood near the house where he repaired machinery and shod horses. He was an excellent carpenter, and no man could do better cabinet work. In short, if there was any branch of mechanical labor in which he did not excel, I failed to discover it; while Mrs. Hunt was as skillful and thorough in her departments as he was in his.

Huldah, the eldest daughter, was a most exemplary girl; the pride and comfort of her father, the stay and support of her mother, the guide of her younger sisters, a faithful friend and a model pupil. At the end of my two years of work here she took charge of the school, when I accepted a position a little nearer home. For two years she did the work of a faithful teacher. Then, just four years from the day on which we first entered upon the mutual relations of teacher and pupil—"God's hand beckoned unawares, And the sweet, white brow was all of her."

Happily the family circle was not again broken in upon by death until twenty years later, when the father was called. Jessie, the second daughter, prepared herself for a teacher, but precarious health compelled her to resign this work. Doretha, the youngest, has for many years been one of Hamilton county's most successful and efficient teachers. The little mother, now in her eighty-third year, is calmly waiting a joyful reunion with the husband of her youth.

Immediately after the close of the fall term in the Hunt district, I began teaching the winter term of the home



school, now known as the Woodleaf school.<sup>6</sup> I remember this as a particularly disagreeable winter. The weather was severe, the schoolhouse indescribably forlorn and dilapidated. The desks were in all stages of demoralization. The dictionary had been used for a billiard ball until it was a handful of shreds and patches. The few scattered bits of plaster, which still adhered to the wall, furnished small protection from the keen northwest winds that played hide and seek through a thousand crevices. The snow drifted in through the roof. The outside walls were guiltless of paint. Here and there one wing of a shutter flapped back and forth groaning and creaking most dismally. We used to sit around the stove to study or recite, one division making way for another as we alternately scorched or froze. It was the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties but we made the time count for all that.

In this school six families were represented by twenty-three pupils. With the exception of Biernatzki brothers, William, Henry, and Albert, and my own brothers, Charles, Ulysses and Frank,<sup>7</sup> I have lost trace of them. Albert Biernatzki, as bonnie a brown-eyed laddie as ever blessed a mother's heart and home, was first inured to alphabetic toils, while his brothers had already attained to the dignity of the third reader and a primary arithmetic. William is now in business in Webster City; Henry died in 1893 and Albert is now Judge Biernatzki of Salem, South Dakota.

#### CONTENDS WITH RIGORS OF WINTER

The next spring (1868) I returned to the Hunt school. New settlers had increased the number of pupils to seventeen. The road was less rough and wild than the

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<sup>6</sup>The Woodleaf school-house now stands on the Kamrar road, a few rods east from Highway No. 60, but it used to stand on the southeast corner next to the highway.

<sup>7</sup>Ulysses Briggs, called "Ulis" by the family, is now living at the age of eighty-six, in Ukiah, California. Charles Briggs, a stone mason and contractor, died at the Briggs farm home in 1931. Frank Briggs, now in his eighty-fourth year, still lives on the hame place in Briggs Woods, where he owns 125 acres of land in Boone and Independence townships.

year before, and ere the summer had passed, four of the seven creeks had well nigh disappeared.

November 9th found me again at my post ready to commence the winter term. The first week I got along pretty well, but by Tuesday of the second week, the first blizzard of the season was on—snow, frost and wind, each contending for the mastery. I started for school half an hour before daylight. Brother Ulysses with a lantern went along to help me over the nearest creek, which we crossed on stepping-stones. But my feet slipped on an icy boulder and I fell through the ice, filling my shoes with water. There was no time to go back so I struggled on through the storm over that long, weary five miles. When I reached the schoolhouse I found no one there. Even those living nearest had been unable to face the storm. I went on to Mr. Hunt's, where as ever I found welcome and good cheer. My courage had all oozed out of my frozen finger tips and for the remainder of the winter, I stayed with this kindly family.

When school closed on January 9th (1869), the snow lay heavy and deep through all the surrounding country. On the last day my brother Stephen and one of the neighbor boys came to visit the school. My brother strongly opposed my going home that night so we concluded to wait until the next morning, leaving there about nine o'clock. What a getting home it was! Hannibal crossing the Alps was a mere circumstance in comparison. At least three miles of the way lay through trackless snow that might be anywhere from two to six feet deep. An incipient January thaw had honeycombed the mass just sufficiently to let us sink through at every step. I am not quite positive as to what experiences befell my two companions in tribulation, for we were seldom within hailing distance of each other. Where the snow was not more than two feet in depth I tried to walk; when deeper I could make more progress by creeping on my hands and knees. When neither way would do, I drew my garments close about me, holding them

fast with my hands and feet, then rolled over the ground like "Slow-solid and Stickly-prickly" after their metamorphosis. When we reached home, a little after two, we were as wet as they after they had "soaked all night in the turbid Amazon."

That summer (1869) I took charge of the Pleasant Hill school,<sup>8</sup> about four miles south of my home. We had some sunshine that summer, but every day we had rain sometime during the twenty-four hours. Happily my previously formed aquatic habits had made me proof against such trifles and I bore my frequent duckings and drenchings with commendable philosophy.

One lovely evening in June—we had had our morning shower—a party of young people insisted on my joining them for a walk over to the Sternberg Mills. Our road lay through deep woods, and the rank foliage produced by the abundant rains was massed everywhere in almost tropical profusion. Bright flowers gave a touch of color and from green depths came a trill of some belated bird, and over all the glory of the waning day. The old mills were nestled down among the hills in one of the most picturesque localities along the Boone. Some of the workmen were still there and piloted by them, we explored every nook and corner of the place.<sup>9</sup>

The miller, John Ross, whom the early settlers of Hamilton county remember well, was especially courteous and painstaking. Our researches ended, we stopped to rest on a great nearby log which made a convenient

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<sup>8</sup>The Pleasant Hill school-house, in use today, is still located four miles south of Briggs Woods on the southeast corner of the cross road that intersects highway No. 60.

<sup>9</sup>The site of the Sternberg Mill, also known as the Ross Mill, is on the Bert Pierce farm six miles south of Webster City, in the valley of the Boone river west of the farm home. One of the mill stones from this mill may be seen in the dooryard of the Pierce home. The old mill site is one of the most picturesque in the Boone valley. In the early 1900's summer cabins were erected in this vicinity by Dr. F. J. Drake and Robert Jones of Webster City and used for several years for summer outings.

The mystery of John Ross's murder was never solved. His nephew, John Ross, was accused of the crime, arrested and tried, but acquitted in October of 1869.

"My old path" was the one Agnes Briggs walked from the Hunt school to her home in Briggs Woods, during the terms of school which she taught in the Hunt district.



seat. The river, dark, deep and silent as the tide of eternity, lay at our feet, and above lay,

The last high upward slant of sun upon the trees  
Like a dead soldier's sword upon his pall.

We chatted a while of old times and when I rose to go, Mr. Ross said, "You must be sure to come to see us some day. At least you might come when you can't find any other place to go." "I shall come," I answered, "whether I can find another place to go or not." Little more than a week later as I was on my way to school, I met a messenger with the tidings, "John Ross was murdered last night." How strange and awful it seemed! I kept my promise and went to see him; but the closed eyes gave me no look of recognition, and the poor discolored face no smile of welcome.<sup>9</sup>

### A HOLIDAY JOURNEY

The winter of 1870-71, I received a very pressing invitation to preside over the Randall school,<sup>10</sup> at the then extravagant salary of thirty-five dollars per month. Such a temptation was not to be resisted, though the school was more than twenty miles from home. Here I had fifty pupils of all ages from four to forty-five; several men recently from the old country having come to learn English. During this term I boarded with Mrs. Rasmus Sheldahl, a daughter of Lars Henryson, who was for many years a member of the Hamilton county board of supervisors. Modern luxuries were not much in evidence here, but the people were very kind and did their best for me and that was good enough.

I had been teaching seven weeks when the director informed me that the school would expect at least a three

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<sup>10</sup>The so-called Randall school in Scott township was and is known as the Sheldahl school. It was built in 1860 and located about one and one-half miles east and one and one-half miles south of the present site of Randall. The locality was later known as Cristy Town. The home of Lars Henryson, father of Mrs. Rasmus Sheldahl and Judge O. J. Henderson, now of Webster City, was near the schoolhouse and for a number of years housed the post office of Randall.

The Sheldahl school-house was later moved to the present site of Randall but in the 1930's was restored to its original site by former pupils. It is now used as a museum for local historical collections and is called the Sheldahl Memorial Hall. Among these collections are photographs of former teachers of the school, early pioneer families, and local musical organizations.

days' vacation for the Christmas holidays, to which they were looking forward with eager anticipation. I could not refuse, though as a rule, I object to holidays. This one happily would give me the wished for opportunity of spending Christmas under the home roof-tree. Though how to get there—it would be easy enough now—but that was long before the shriek of the whistle echoed across the fields and the rushing train roared by. The weather was severe and the snow deep; I could not ask anyone else to make such a trip. I had never before attempted so long a walk but felt certain I could manage it.

Friday evening came clear and cold. I left the school house unusually early for me but the twenty-third of December is not a long day, and the sun was already sinking into a cloud sea of gold and amethyst, when I started across the fields, thinking to reach Lakin's Grove,<sup>11</sup> spend the night with Mrs. John Cooper and then go on in the morning.

It was a difficult matter to make much speed through that trackless waste of snow. The scene grew graver. The somber night shadows settled over all and before I had gone a mile I knew I was lost. Hungry and tired I realized I must give up my plan of reaching Mrs. Cooper's that night and content myself with trying to find the nearest place of shelter. I plodded along watching eagerly—as the lost traveller always does—for a light in some window. At last I saw a faint glimmer through the trees and with nervous haste pressed on towards it. I found that it proceeded from the tiny window of a tiny cottage in the woods. I rapped at the door; nobody came and I rapped again; still no response. I drew off my glove in order to emphasize the raps with unpadded knuckles. Inside an Indian "ghost dance" or something equally exciting and vociferous seemed to be

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<sup>11</sup>Lakins Grove is now a beautiful little stretch of woods with deep ravines along the Skunk river about one mile north of the present town of Ellsworth and seven miles from Randall. It was once a settlement with a post office station on the stage route from Marshalltown. The old Lakin home is on a hill just east of the grove, west and south of the Ellsworth cemetery.

in progress, but I hoped that in course of time some one would hear the outside disturbance. I peeped through the little window to see what my chances were. The house had one small, unfinished room and the only visible furniture was a small, rough table on which stood the light that had attracted me—a bit of rag in a dish of grease. The place swarmed with children, eight or ten, as nearly as I could count, for they were all engaged in the wildest, maddest revel that untamed child nature is capable of. By and by a man came with a pail of milk in his hand. To him I stated my case and asked to be directed to Ambion Anderson's. With much difficulty I gathered an idea of the direction I must take and reached the place without further mishap. Their kindness, as always, was unfailing and I was warmed and fed to my heart's content.

#### COMBATTING COLD AND SNOW

Morning dawned clear, cold and still and by sunrise I was again on my way. A keen northwest wind was blowing and it was nearly noon when famished and chilled I reached Lakin's Grove with seven miles of my journey accomplished. I felt very reluctant about stopping, though I was acquainted with several families here. However, I feared my feet were freezing cold, so by the time I had reached the last house in the grove I dared not go by without stopping to thaw out. I was not unacquainted with the lady of the house, having often met her at church, where she had as often urged me to call. I was certain it would be no intrusion to do so now. In response to my timid rap she came to the door. I explained how I happened to be there and asked permission to come in and get warm. It was grudgingly given and on entering I drew up a chair to the stove and tried to warm my poor chilled feet. She had just taken a large pan of bread out of the oven; a big kettle of "that delicious American beverage known as porkinbeans" simmered on the back of the stove; and a pan of dried apples was bubbling on the front. True, these things were not



dainties, but how good that food smelled. Like Esau, I was faint, and would have sold my birthright for a mess of pottage, but none was offered. I suppose the woman resented my interfering with her dinner hour. So in a few moments I took my departure relieved to find myself outside her door again. The bitter northwest wind was warm compared with her charity.

Eight miles of snow-covered prairie lay between me and the next house, which was Mr. Darrin's, but I pressed forward with that pitiless blast cutting my face and beating me back at every step. What a weary way it was! My feet moved like lead, but I reached the place at last. Miss Ella, the dark-eyed daughter of the house, met me at the door and seizing my arm, she whisked me in without ceremony and in an instant she and her mother had my wrappings off. I was placed in an arm chair by the stove and kind-hearted, motherly Mrs. Darrin tried to fit my feet into the oven by the side of a brown turkey that lay there comfortably sizzling. In vain I protested that I could stay only long enough to thaw out for it was late and I was far from home. Mr. Darrin gave me most positive assurance that I could not cross his threshold again until I had had my dinner. I shall not try to tell how good that dinner was. People who were never hungry could not be made to understand. I do not recall meeting Mr. Darrin's people again, as they removed to another county shortly after that. But, in grateful remembrance, I number them with the guests which I have with me always.<sup>12</sup>

Another hour of precious daylight had faded and it was four o'clock when I again set forth on my pilgrimage. In the meantime the weather had changed. The sky was overcast and a storm seemed imminent. The snow was falling thick and fast before I reached the place where I must turn out of the highway into the old path that I had so often traversed during my first two years of

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<sup>12</sup>The Darrin or Derrin family lived a short time about eight miles from Lakins Grove on a farm near the present site of Kamrar. They removed to another county shortly after Ella, the daughter, had suffered a critical illness following an unsuccessful attempt on her life by a disappointed lover.

work but the track was quite obliterated. Darkness came on apace, no landmarks were visible. Still undismayed I plodded on, thinking I could not lose my way on such familiar ground. I even remembered singing in the storm:

Haste, traveler, haste! the night comes on,  
And many a shining hour is gone;  
The storm is gathering in the west  
And thou art far from home and rest;  
Haste, traveler, haste.

Another hour of weary wandering, when just as I had decided that I was rapidly reaching nowhere, I once more caught the glimmer of one of those ever-welcome lights in the window. I was sure it was Mr. Bauer's. I knew the place well and once reaching it, I could easily make my way home from there. On nearing the house I was surprised to find that it had an entirely unfamiliar look, and a closer survey satisfied me that I had never seen it before. I dreaded losing more time but felt compelled to stop and enquire "where I was at." I was most happily surprised when the face of an old friend appeared in the doorway—one whom I had often met though I had never visited her. It was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel McComb, two of our courageous, enterprising pioneers.<sup>13</sup>

All the while I had thought myself going north, good angels were guiding me south. Mrs. McComb would not wait for a word of explanation until she had drawn me into the house and removed my snow covered wrappings. In spite of my remonstrances she insisted on preparing me a lunch. What a delicious little tea it was. Pioneer she might be but no table could be more dainty than hers. Mrs. McComb was a thoroughly womanly woman and a genuine homemaker. Given a drygoods box, a bit of cheesecloth and a paper of tacks and she would furnish

<sup>13</sup>The home of Fred Bauer stood on the site in Section 21, Independence township, just southeast of the present overhead bridge over the Northwestern railroad about two miles southeast of Briggs Woods on the road to Kamrar. In the storm, Agnes Briggs had lost her sense of direction, and instead of heading north, had gone south to the McComb home. Samuel McComb came to this home in 1867 but later removed to a farm north of the present site of Kamrar.

you a home so cozy and comfortable that you would have no desire to exchange it for any other in the world. Lunch disposed of, like poor little Joe, I realized that I "must be movin' on," and prepared to do so, though they firmly insisted on my remaining with them that night. But I was reluctant to trespass further on their hospitality, especially when I was so near home. So I would not consent to stay.

At this crisis an idea dawned on Mr. McComb and he pleaded on his own behalf—"Wouldn't I stay and read a novel to him? I was such a beautiful reader and he so loved to hear me." Of course if I felt that I could favor them I would stay. But I have long suspected that the reading was a cunningly devised plot to keep me in out of the darkness and the storm.

It was well for me that I stayed for even in the bright light of the next day it took me nearly three hours to reach home, which was little more than two miles distant. The face of the country was so changed I could not recognize it. The broad tract of land that three years before had been open prairie was now enclosed in cultivated farms. Everything was strange and I well knew that had they permitted me to venture forth that night, I must either have wandered through the fields until morning or perished in the storm. Life's fitful fever is over for these two friends of mine, but the memory of their generous, thoughtful kindness deepens as the years pass by. As I think of them like a whisper comes the prayer for departed souls—

Eternal rest grant unto them, O God  
And may light perpetual shine upon them

#### ANOTHER SCHOOL—NEW FRIENDS

The early spring of 1871 found me plying my vocation at Rose Grove. This place will be remembered by the pioneer settlers of Hamilton county, as one of the divisions of the old stage line between Webster City and Marshalltown. Even at this day there are not lacking those who recall the time when as travellers they stayed



their weary feet at the hospitable doors of the old way-side inn nestled among the trees.<sup>14</sup>

Here was the family home of Judge S. L. Rose and Mary E. Rose, the star of that bright household. When I first knew them in 1865, the family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Rose and their daughter, Emma; Mrs. Rose's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Norris; and Mr. and Mrs. Bicknell, brother-in-law and sister of Mrs. Norris. The only other near relatives were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bicknell and their daughter, Alice, of Webster City. They were frequent visitors at the Grove and were always joyously welcomed.<sup>15</sup>

In this group were included some of the finest types of old age, the most superb types of maturity, and the loveliest types of youth I have ever seen. All that gentle birth, culture, wealth, and refinement could contribute was their rightful inheritance; and all of happiness that a mutual, steadfast devotion and perfect trust could bestow seemed theirs.

Many guests came and went. Most of these were from Fort Dodge. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Haskell and their little daughter, Hattie; Mrs. Kirkup and her two young daughters, Georgie and Rose; Miss Wells, daughter of Surgeon Wells; Mr. Bassett, brother of Mrs. Kirkup, and at that time a prominent lawyer of Fort Dodge, with a host of others, whom I have ceased to recall.

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<sup>14</sup>Rose Grove is today a beautiful stretch of open woods along the Skunk river. The old inn, a station on the stage line from Marshalltown to Webster City, stood on the hill at the northeast corner of the crossroads north of the present farm home of Duncan McMartin or on the southwest corner of Section 30.

The Rose Grove school house is still on the same site as in 1871 on the southeast corner of Section 30, one mile east of the site of the old inn, where Sections 29, 30, 31, and 32 join.

<sup>15</sup>Judge S. L. Rose of Rose Grove was a colorful figure of his day, a man of commanding appearance, genial manners, and political sagacity. An able lawyer, he served as district judge, chairman of the board of supervisors and president of the first county fair. One winter he edited the *Hamilton County Freeman* of Webster City.

His farming operations were extensive but expensive and not always practical. He was an enthusiast and promoter and there was a hint of his being erratic in some of his dealings. His land was finally sold at sheriff's sale and he returned to the east after the death of his wife and daughter broken in body and fortune. But he was generally liked in spite of any faults. (See Jesse Lee, *Hamilton County History*, Volume I, pp. 151-3.)

The old house was a lively place in those days, but among them all there was not one to compare with her, the dear mistress of the home. She was the center of that bright throng and moved as a queen among her subjects. And she was a queen—"a queen by virtue of her brow and heart, not needing to be crowned." In form she was the embodiment of grace. Her delicate oval face was framed in shining bands of soft dark hair, and lighted by wonderful dark eyes. When she flashed forth one of her quick radiant smiles, it was as though a sudden burst of sunshine had swept the place. It was a spontaneous outburst from a heart welling over with love and joy and her beneficence, like the Heavenly Father's, fell alike upon all. Like the legendary saint, she cast no shadow as she walked for she herself was sunlight. I could never associate a thought of sorrow with her or hers. For them all the days must brim with nectar, and all the years be as "starry circles, golden set."

But, in an evil hour a baleful spirit entered this fair realm and calamities followed fast upon one another. The splendid fortune with which the Norrises had dowered their daughter was dwindling rapidly; and sadder than all the death angel shadowed the home, until, one by one, with only short intervals between, were removed every member of that devoted band so long unbroken.

The first to go was poor "Grandpa Norris." He went for his accustomed walk one summer afternoon and did not return at the usual hour. They went to seek him and found him lying on the green bank "asleep." In a little while "Uncle Bicknell" and "Aunt Lucy" crossed over into the morning land to keep him company.

All these had lived long and well; their work was done and it was their time to go. But when the next shadow fell, it was not on one who had borne the burden and heat of the day, or whose life had attained its full fruition. The call was for Emma, the youngest and fairest of the household band. Our hearts rebelled against

the stern decree, which doomed that radiant girl, so glorious in her young, glad beauty; so loved, so idolized—to the cold embrace of death. But even that mother's mighty love could not hold her back and one bright day "she passed through glory's morning gate and walked in Paradise."

Still the lonely mother kept her appointed way. There was little change save that the sweet face had grown paler and wore an expression like that in the pictures of "Mary, the mother of Jesus, as she gives up her Son."

A year or two had passed when the word reached me that she was suffering from continued ill-health, and a little later on, like thunder-clap from a clear sky, came the message, "Mrs. Rose is dead."

The last leaf on the ancestral tree was Mrs. Norris. The dear little grandmother with her gentle ways, her sweet, old time courtesy and her grand, heroic soul "with emptied arms and treasures lost" was still waiting and watching for the coming of the morning.

Then did big-hearted, generous Mrs. Henry Barstow come to the rescue, and gathered that poor, forlorn, forsaken soul under her motherly wing, with the comforting assurance, "My home shall be thy home without money and without price, until death do us part." And she rested there content to wait the little while till she could cross the boundary line and come unto her own again. The time of waiting was indeed but a little while, and one glad day she went home to family reunion in heaven.

The old homestead of Rose Grove, consisting originally of two sections of land, has long since been parcelled out to strangers—

And round about that home, the glory  
That blushed and bloomed,  
Is but a dim remembered story  
Of the old time entombed.



There is a pathos in doing even the simplest thing for the last time. It is not alone in bidding adieu to our beloved dead that we feel this strange pain. It comes when we look our last upon the scene we have loved, or when we stand in some old familiar path that our feet may never tread again. Whether it be the closing scene in a chosen life-work, or whether we look our last upon a tree or a flower endeared by some tender memory, we still realize the hidden bitterness of that sad refrain, "The last time."

#### MEMORIES OF THE HOME PLACE

To me the words are associated with a thousand thronging recollections of one special locality—the dear old woods surrounding the home place. On a wooded upland whose sides slope down to encircling streams, stands the old home from which, one by one, ten of the eleven members of our family circle have played truant forever. Of all who used to fill the old rooms with life only one sad solitary figure now remains. But the sorrowful images recalled, as thought re-enters that once familiar portal, lose themselves, as it again emerges into the brightness and verdure of the woodland, every foot of which is hallowed ground.

Whether robed in spring-time beauty or in summer glories, autumn splendor, or in winter snows, the forest scene was beautiful; but especially so in spring with its wealth of bloom and verdure. Here the earliest and fairest of the wildwood blossoms opened their starry eyes; the June berries' scented snow drifted on the hillside; thickets of wild crab-apple blooms flashed their rosy glow from shadowy depths; scores of blossoming hawthorne trees spread their blossoming boughs like a fragrant white cloud overhead, while great trees with spreading branches like protecting arms, towered above as keeping watch and ward over all. Hundreds of sylvan creatures, whose quaint beauty and curious ways made it a perpetual delight to watch them, had their homes

here; and for our four brothers this made a veritable treasure trove of every foot of space.<sup>16</sup>

We were a busy family with little leisure and less inclination to seek recreation in accustomed ways or by conventional methods. Still we had our times of relaxation for whenever a brother came with the imperative behest—"Girls, girls! come quick! we've made another discovery!"—no matter how opportune or inopportune the time, away we all went to see the wonderful thing that had come to pass. And we were never disappointed. There was always something well worth seeing—some new species of plant or flower; or some remarkable development of animal or vegetable life; a strange bird or a peculiar fossil from the stone quarries. Nothing new or strange ever escaped their notice.

Our eldest brother, Stephen, was gifted with a marvelous insight into Mother Nature's mysteries. I had a curious impression that in some wierd fashion, he walked and talked with her as friend with friend. He knew the favorite haunts of every species of native bird or plant. He seldom failed to find the earliest of its kind and always, those first shy blossoms were gathered in the early morning into a tiny dew-gemmed cluster for one of his sisters. Sometimes he brought us flowers of peculiar varieties. I remember one cluster that resembled lilies of the valley and another time a bouquet of immense pink and white lady-slippers. Not only were we (his sisters) initiated into the mysteries of bird and insect housekeeping but the haunts of fishes and reptiles came in for a large share of our wondering admiration. We came and went as silently as the spirit of the woods without the timid creatures having been as much as aware of our presence.

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<sup>16</sup>About sixty acres of this beautiful woodland has now been converted into a public park. It was given to Hamilton county in 1917 by Thirza Briggs Aldrich (Mrs. Charles Aldrich), as a memorial to Ulis and Ellen Briggs from their children.

The county board of supervisors have erected a memorial entrance gate, built a new bridge over the creek, which runs through the woods and improved the roads. The park is open to the public every day in the year, and is enjoyed in all its native woodland beauty by nature lovers from all over the county. It is truly a fitting memorial to this pioneer family.

Through this home woods I passed each morning and evening during the time that I was teaching twenty terms of school. Just beyond the southern limit stood the little schoolhouse (now rebuilt) whither the precious mother sent her whole nest of overgrown broodlings during the winter of 1879-80.<sup>6</sup> It was our last winter all together and was perhaps the happiest of our lives.

It is a startling thing when death first enters the home circle, especially one so extended as ours, whose members have all been sheltered by the same roof, until the youngest has passed twenty. When three years later our brother Stephen went away from us to dwell in the endless springtime of God's greater country, he took so much of our sunshine with him that the old place never seemed quite the same again. But so fast are we gathering homeward, that the real home is there, not here; and so the changes come and the years pass by as a tale that is told.

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### HOPES TO BE REALIZED

The fall emigration is now at its height, every few minutes one of the white covered wagons with its miscellaneous load of human beings and household furniture, drawn by a yoke of patient oxen, may be seen on each of the great highways leading west from the Mississippi. A great field for thought is opened by the sight of the hardy pioneers to the philosophical observer. How many painful partings, how many griefs and tears, have attended this mighty exodus; and intermingled with griefs and tears, are bright hopes and visions of the future home, and peaceful farm house, all dimly seen in the dreams of the wayworn wanderers. May all their hopes be realized, and in their new home, may they find that content which failed them in the east.—*Cedar Falls (Iowa) Banner*, Oct. 27, 1854.

## THE "BIG STRIKE" AT OELWEIN SHOPS

### CHICAGO GREAT WESTERN IN RECEIVERSHIP WITH SUBSEQUENT REORGANIZATION, 1907-1909<sup>1</sup>

By JAMES THOMAS CRAIG

During the latter part of 1893 the directors of the Chicago Great Western Railway Company faced drastic retrenchment. Organized January 11, 1892, in St. Paul, Minnesota, they had taken over the property of the bankrupt Chicago, St. Paul & Kansas City Railway Company. Their president, A. B. Stickney, had organized the Great Western on a stock basis with no mortgage on the property. The industrial panic of 1893 necessitated a curtailment of expenses. To eliminate the expense of hauling broken down and wrecked equipment all the way back to St. Paul, new machine and repair shops were built at Oelwein. Also, in moving the shops from the city of St. Paul to the town of Oelwein it was believed that less money would be lost in labor disputes. No major labor difficulty arose for over eight years. Short strikes had occurred when the company temporarily refused to grant requested increases in wages. Over the eight year period wages increased thirty per cent for all shop employees, and in some instances as much as forty per cent. In August, 1907, the machinists and boilermakers asked for still another raise. The company, whose debts were reaching unmanageable proportions, refused the increase, but offered to compromise. The machinists and boilermakers rejected the offer and on September 14th walked out in protest. When their places were filled with strike breakers all remaining

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<sup>1</sup>This is the third article on the history of the Oelwein shops of the Chicago Great Western Railway Company by Mr. Craig. The first article, "Oelwein Secures the C.G.W. Shops, 1894," appeared in *THE ANNALS OF IOWA*, Third Series, Vol. XXIV, No. 3, Jan., 1943, Part 1, pp. 210-235. The second article, "Great Western Builds Oelwein Shops, 1894-99," appeared in *THE ANNALS OF IOWA*, Third Series, Vol. XXVI, No. 2, Oct., 1944, pp. 90-128. At the time he did the research for these articles, in 1942, Mr. Craig taught history in the senior high school in Oelwein. He is now an instructor in history at Central High School, Flint, Michigan. Mr. Craig is also the author of "Muskegon and the Great Chicago Fire, 1871-73," which appeared in *Michigan History*, Vol. 28, No. 4, Oct., 1944, pp. 610-623.



shop employees walked out in sympathy. The strike continued until December 14th when the machinists accepted the company's terms. The tie-up of equipment resulting from the strike decreased the company's earnings to such an extent that interest payments could not be met. On January 9, 1908, the property was put into the hands of receivers. The company was reorganized March 16, 1909, and sold August 21st following. The strike, with its effects on Oelwein, the C.G.W., in receivership, and its reorganization and sale form this history.<sup>2</sup>

### MACHINISTS AND BOILERMAKERS DEMAND HIGHER PAY

In their demands of August, 1907, the machinists and boilermakers at the Great Western shops in Oelwein asked for a nine hour day and forty-five cents an hour pay. They were then working ten hours a day and the machinists were being paid thirty-seven cents an hour; the boilermakers, thirty-eight. They declared the increase was necessary to meet the higher cost of living and also that other roads were giving raises to their machinists and boilermakers. On September 9th the company announced its approval of the nine hour day, but offered only a three and one-half cent raise. The machinists and boilermakers refused the compromise and on September 14th walked out of the shops. Approximately 350 men, 200 machinists, 75 boilermakers and 75 helpers, refused to return to work. On September 19th a bargaining committee of the boilermakers' union met with C.G.W. officials in St. Paul, but no agreement was reached.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Craig, *op. cit.*, "Oelwein Secures C.G.W. Shops, 1894," and "Great Western Builds Oelwein Shops, 1894-99," Stickney, A. B., "Report to C.G.W. Stockholders," printed in the *Oelwein Register*, Apr. 23, 1908; Deyo, Earl E., superintendent, Illinois division, C.G.W.R.R. Co., "History of C.G.W.R.R.," July 10, 1939, letter to B. F. Parsons, assistant to the president, Oct. 29, 1941, notebook, n.p.; Fitch, Geo. W., *Past and Present of Fayette County, Iowa*, Vol. 1, pp. 138, 317; Seley, C. A., "Shop Layouts," *The American Engineering and Railroad Journal*, Aug., 1905, p. 307; I.C.C., *Valuation Report of C.G.W.R.R. Co.*, Vol. 35, 1932, pp. 147, 271; Stand. Corp. Rec., *Corporation News Edition*, Aug., 1941, p. 1494; Eastman, Joseph B., "Report on Consolidation," June 12, 1936, p. 4; Parsons, B. F., secretary, C.G.W.R.R. Co., letter to the author, Apr. 21, 1942.

<sup>3</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 9, 14, 19, 21, 1907; Stickney, *op. cit.*

Since the Oelwein shops had been opened in 1899, the C.G.W. had endeavored to keep its employees contented. President Stickney, who determined the company's financial policies, was known as "the railroad president on whose road there have been few strikes." He had generally preserved harmony among the shop men and their loyalty to him was "proverbial." He recalls:<sup>4</sup>

Between 1900 and 1906 the members of the seven different unions have received five increases in wages amounting to between thirty-one per cent and forty per cent. About the first of August, 1907, the machinists and boilermakers made a demand upon the company for a further increase in wages, which, if granted, would have made an increase of wages since 1900, for the boilermakers of fifty-five per cent, and for the machinists of sixty-three per cent, and coupled with the demand of increased wages were demands for rules relating to shop conditions which, if conceded, would have added as much, or more, to the cost of maintaining the equipment as the increase of wages would have added. It goes without saying that if the demands of these two dominating unions had been conceded, similar demands of the other five unions engaged in maintenance of equipment, and of still five other unions engaged in running trains and in switch service, would have followed. Well knowing the enormous loss which a strike of its machinists and boilermakers would entail upon the company, the management offered, as a compromise, an increased rate of compensation of about ten per cent, and agreed to practically all the proposed rules. . . .

#### REMOVAL OF SHOPS RUMORED

Less than a week after the outbreak of the strike it was rumored that the shops were to be moved from Oelwein. These rumors were traced by the local editor to articles appearing in Des Moines and Dubuque newspapers. Fred S. Robinson, of the *Oelwein Register*, denied these by saying:<sup>5</sup>

Des Moines and Dubuque Sunday papers came out with a blare of trumpets and a beating of drums announcing that Oelwein is to be virtually wiped off the map by removal of the Great Western shops from this city, and the erection of four smaller shops at Des Moines, Dubuque, St. Paul and Fort Dodge. This rumor is very important if true, but it is a bunch of hot air that is built

<sup>4</sup>*Oelwein Register*, July 25, 1906; Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 23, 1907.

in rumor, and the natural desire of those cities to profit by such a removal. . . . This wholesale knocking on Oelwein is not very creditable to the papers of some of our larger cities, and this is a new turn at the game. . . .

Shortly afterwards Stickney "explicitly" denied the rumors.<sup>6</sup>

Though not particularly disturbed by the above rumors, the people of Oelwein desired an early end to the strike. During the afternoon of September 24th handbills were distributed calling a meeting of all persons interested in making an effort to terminate the strike. That evening business and professional men, shop men, and citizens in general met in the city council chamber. Upon being asked to preside, L. A. Megow stated the purpose of the meeting. He declared that he, with others, was "personally interested in the matter and desired to do all in his power to further the interests of the city and its people." G. H. Phillips suggested that a committee be appointed to speak for the strikers in a conference with Great Western officials. He felt that the townspeople should support the men on strike as "the railway can take care of itself." Megow, however, urged that a citizens' committee be appointed to meet with both the strikers and the C.G.W. Megow's plan was almost unanimously approved and Mayor T. L. Hanson, H. D. Simon, and Frank Tousley were selected. After talking with Hanson and Tousley, Simon announced that they would meet with the company officials only when the men on strike desired them to do so. An inquiry was raised as to whether or not the strikers wanted a citizens' committee to act on their behalf. One of the strikers, James Sherratt, replied that, although he could not speak for the machinists' and boilermakers' unions, he knew they had not asked for such a committee. In part, he said: "The affair is a contest between the railway and its employees. . . . However, anything that can be done to bring the strike to a satisfactory

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<sup>6</sup>*St. Paul Dispatch*, reprinted in *Oelwein Register*, Sept. 25, 1907; *Oelwein Register*, Sept. 26, 1907.

conclusion will be welcomed." The meeting ended and the citizens' committee was not heard of again.<sup>7</sup>

### C.G.W. EMPLOYS "STRIKE BREAKERS"

Great Western officials were determined to keep Oelwein shops running. Already criticized for giving poor service, they knew they had to keep the "Maple Leaf" moving! Further decreases in earning power would bankrupt the road. To keep the equipment rolling the shops had to be kept in operation and their solution was to use "strike breakers." The first group arrived on September 27th and were put to work in the machine and boiler shops. As reported:<sup>8</sup>

They came in about fifteen coaches from the east and their number was variously estimated at from four hundred to five hundred men. The first hours of the morning were taken in signing them up as machinists, boilermakers and other lines, and it was a busy scene in the company's offices at the shops. . . . As far as could be learned the men came from Chicago, Cincinnati, New York and other eastern cities.

Earlier, it had been reported that non-union men employed by the Great Western at other points were to be brought to Oelwein to fill the places vacated by the strikers. But these would have never made the great number of men who arrived on September 27th.<sup>9</sup>

Within a week after the first "strike breakers" went to work all remaining union shop employees staged a sympathetic strike. The blacksmiths and their helpers refused to work the morning the so-called "scabs" arrived. The steamfitters walked out the next day and on September 30th the woodworkers and car men quit. The painters walked out October 1st, and two days later the tinsmiths, the last to go out, called it quits.<sup>10</sup>

With the shops shut down the Great Western sent George A. Goodell, general superintendent, to Oelwein

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<sup>7</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 25, 1907.

<sup>8</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 27, 1907.

<sup>9</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 19, 26, 1907.

<sup>10</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 27, 29, 30, Oct. 2, 5, 1907.



to take charge. Upon arrival he said:<sup>11</sup>

With other officials of the company I am located here to re-open the shops, and shall remain here til that is effected. I have no statement to give out as to whether the Oelwein shops will be open or not. We have no feeling of ill will toward the men who have been in our employ here til recently, but the C.G.W. will not pay higher wages than other roads, or higher than its income will justify. . . .

Later he stated:<sup>12</sup>

We are bringing in workmen every day, and at present have in our employ ninety-eight machinists and eighteen boilermakers. We have seven fires running in the blacksmith shop. A force of men have begun work in the car shops and four men are doing business in the mill. We have sent out three engines since the strike developed. We shall not attempt to open the coach shop as we have entered into a contract with the Pullman shops to do all of that work, and coaches will be sent to Pullman for repairs, painting, etc.

Many of the "new employees" were found to be incompetent and were "shipped out." The *Register* reported:<sup>13</sup>

The new employees appeared to be of various types of workmen as those evidently unaccustomed to doing manual labor. . . . Sunday the company shipped out several carloads of those who had been tried and found wanting in skill to manipulate the tools in the machine, boiler and blacksmith shops. They retain quite a large force and are shipping in others in an endeavor to secure competent non-union men to perform their work.

A few days later the newspaper stated: "The company is daily shipping in men to take the strikers' places. The men who come in are, in a majority, incompetent, it is presumed, for they are shipped out again." Stickney later admitted that not for six weeks did the C.G.W. secure any sizeable number of good shop men.<sup>14</sup>

The first batch which was discharged, consisting of about one hundred men, refused to leave the barricade, made themselves a barricade within the company's barricade, and producing guns and knives, refused to budge. The company's fighting men, after

<sup>11</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 27, Oct. 4, 1907.

<sup>12</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 4, 1907.

<sup>13</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 27, 30, 1907.

<sup>14</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 5, 1907; Stickney, *op. cit.*

a day or two, forced them out of the barricade and into a special train which carried them under guard to Chicago.

Actually, very little repairs were made before November 1st. By then the general recession in industry was forcing manufacturing establishments to lay off shop workers by the hundreds. Many of these, when brought to Oelwein, were unable to do railway car and locomotive repairing. As Stickney later said, "Only by constant effort and at great expense" were the necessary workmen obtained.<sup>15</sup>

#### STRIKE BREAKERS FED AND HOUSED IN THE SHOPS

To avert trouble with the men on strike the strike breakers were fed and housed in the shops. The afternoon before their arrival cots and tables were set up in the machine shop and roundhouse. The next morning when nearly five hundred men arrived to work the machine shop was cleared. The cots were removed to the balcony above the machine shop and to the three floors at the east end of the main building. The tables were set up next in the coach shop and later moved into the paint shop, which was made into a kitchen and dining hall. One hundred and thirty of the "strike breakers" ate their meals in the roundhouse and slept on cots in box cars on a nearby siding. A check room and postal station were provided in the main building and a barber shop in the car shop. By the end of October three emergency structures were erected west of the main building. Two of these were for dormitories, with bunks, wash rooms and toilet facilities for six hundred men. The third building was a kitchen and dining hall. As these buildings were across Otter Creek a wooden bridge was built so that the men could cross over from the shops.<sup>16</sup>

To prepare and serve meals for approximately six hundred working men, "a small army of men"—chefs and assistant cooks—were employed by the Great Western. Negroes were used to wait on tables and wash

<sup>15</sup>Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>16</sup>Oelwein Register, Sept. 26, 27, Oct. 4, 12, 22, 25, 1907; Stickney, *op. cit.*

dishes. "The food looks to be up to a high standard," reported the *Register*, and from one of the men: "The feed is excellent!" Meal tickets were issued and a ticket detached for each meal eaten. Most of the provisions were purchased locally. Thousands of pounds of fresh meat, fruits, and vegetables as well as many gallons of milk and cream were consumed daily. Most of the canned goods, flour, sugar, and much fruit was shipped in. A cold storage car was used to keep the perishables. Shelves were built in the paint shop to store provisions. At the roundhouse an empty box car was used for this purpose.<sup>17</sup>

The Great Western prepared to house and feed its "new employees" indefinitely. However, after November 6th, when the C.G.W. obtained an injunction against the strikers interfering with its employees at any place—whether on company property or not, many of the latter began to board and room in town. Several of the men with families rented houses and moved their families to Oelwein. Others who were unable to rent houses secured rooms for their families and boarded out.<sup>18</sup>

#### GUARDS PROTECT SHOPS AND "STRIKE BREAKERS"

Protection for company property and the "strike breakers" was provided by a special guard. Stickney recalled:<sup>19</sup>

To deal with the strike situation it was first necessary to barricade the shops and roundhouse and to employ about one hundred and fifty men, who were sworn in as special policemen, to guard the property of the company and to protect the new men. . . .

The special guards were on duty with the arrival of the first "strike breakers" on September 27th.<sup>20</sup>

A number of guards were scattered about the shops to see that

<sup>17</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 4, 11, 12, 22, 25, 1907.

<sup>18</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 5, 7, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, Nov. 2, 7, 16, 1907; Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup>Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>20</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 27, Oct. 4, 1907.

everything went straight. . . . Guards were placed at all the entrances of the shops and shop yards, and no one is allowed to go in or out without a pass.

The guards ate and slept apart from the workers. Most of them ate at separate tables in the car shop and slept in the paint shop. Thirty ate at the roundhouse and slept in passenger coaches nearby. When the dormitories and dining hall were completed the guards were given new quarters.<sup>21</sup>

The guards maintained a twenty-four hour watch, seven days a week. They ate and slept according to their working hours. Once a reporter wrote: "The shops continue in a state of armed siege, and sentinels patrol every avenue of approach to the inner temple." Not until after the strike was broken was the guard dismissed.<sup>22</sup>

#### "EVERYTHING QUIET ALONG THE OTTER!"

As he watched the first strike breakers enter the shops a reporter noted the guards and said: "There was apparently no need of their services. . . . There are no hostile demonstrations." Later he declared: "One thing is manifest—that there is no disturbance of any kind. Everything is quiet along the Otter!"<sup>23</sup>

And everything was quiet throughout the strike, with but one exception. On the night of October 23rd, the C.G.W. pumping station was attacked. That night when one of the guards attempted to call in he found the telephone dead. Tracing the wire he found it grounded to one of the rails on the railway bridge over Otter creek. Later two men approached the station. One threw a large rock through a window and the other started shooting. The guards returned the fire and "the assailants lit out for the tall timber and escaped." The company offered a reward of two hundred dollars but nothing was ever reported.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 12, 25, 1907.

<sup>22</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 11, 15, Dec. 14, 1907; Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 27, 29, Oct. 5, 1907.

<sup>24</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 25, 1907.



Two other incidents occurred at the shops during the strike. In escorting a group of strike breakers into the shops on the night of October 3rd, one of the guards mistook another for an "outsider" and hit him over the head with such force that several stitches had to be taken. On the afternoon of November 22nd a fight occurred in the shops. Several of the men were drunk and used knives and guns as weapons.<sup>25</sup>

One other fight might be mentioned. On the evening of November 5th Joe Cabelka got into a fight with Charles Simmons, a guard stationed near the C.G.W. ice house. Cabalka had worked at the ice house during the summer but had been laid off at the end of the season and was not a striker. During the fight he was shot twice. Despite testimony that he had shot in self defense, Simmons was charged with intent to kill and held over to the grand jury.<sup>26</sup>

#### INJUNCTION OBTAINED AGAINST STRIKERS

In addition to hiring a special guard to protect company property and strike breakers, the Great Western sought and obtained an injunction against the strikers. On October 4th the C.G.W. obtained an order from the United States circuit court in Cedar Rapids temporarily restraining the strikers from interfering with Great Western trains or property. This court order was served on the strikers the following afternoon. At a hearing, October 17th, in the circuit court in Sioux City, the unions' attorney tried to have the writ dissolved. On the other hand, the Great Western sought to have it enlarged. This was granted. The strikers were restrained not only from interfering with Great Western trains or property, but also from interfering in any way with its employees at any place, whether on company property or not. They were also restrained from picketing the shops or right-of-way. They were not to

<sup>25</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 4, Nov. 23, 1907.

<sup>26</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Nov. 6, 7, 8, 9, 1907.

assemble on company property or on any street leading into the shop yards. Furthermore, they were not to utter threats of violence or use abusive language or "conduct themselves in a manner calculated to prevent any person from entering into the employ of the C.G.W."<sup>27</sup>

A copy of the temporary restraining order as enlarged appeared in the *Register* as follows:<sup>28</sup>

United States Circuit Court, Northern District of Iowa, to:—  
T. P. Hassett, George Weinter, J. E. Vannest, T. F. Gallagher, William Stansfield, A. C. Webber, L. Harthill, P. J. Gallagher, Sam Slick, Thomas Baldridge, E. W. Roberts, W. H. Amoit, Charles Sexton, William Davison, Frank Kirkpatrick, J. E. Fortier, Joseph Butler, Charles O'Harran, George Rupert, Harry Balisdell, John Pierce, Charles Kaiser, R. H. Smith, George Stahl, John B. Hutton, N. Watterworth, P. B. Chase, F. W. Brace, H. Watterworth, R. McDonald, and to all persons who are members of either of the following named organizations or union *viz*: International Association of Machinists, Machinists' Helpers Union Tool Men, International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders of America, International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths and Blacksmiths' Helpers of America, Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers International Alliance, United Association of Steam Fitters, and others whose names are to the complainant unknown, and to your Councillors, Attorneys, Solicitors, Trustees, and Agents, and to each and every one of them, GREETING:

WHEREAS: it hath been represented to the Judges of our Circuit Court of the United States, for the northern district of Iowa in Chancery sitting, on the part of the Chicago Great Western Railway Company, complainant, in a certain bill of complaint as amended exhibited in our said Circuit Court on the Chancery side thereof, before the Judges of said Court, against you the said T. P. Hassett, etc. . . . We therefore . . . do strictly command you, and each of you, and others and all persons conspiring with you or any of you, or with others, and all others whomsoever absolutely to desist and refrain until the further order of this Court from in any way or manner interfering with, hindering, obstructing, or stopping any mail train, express train or other train, whether freight or passenger, engaged in interstate commerce, or carrying passengers or freight between or among the states, and from any manner . . . hereof fail not under the penalty of what the law directs.

<sup>27</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 5, 7, 18, 1907.

<sup>28</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 19, 21, 1907.

To the Marshal of the Northern District of Iowa to execute and return in due form.

WITNESS the Honorable Melville W. Fuller, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America, at Dubuque, Iowa, in said district this seventeenth day of October, A. D., 1907, and of our independence the 132nd year.

(signed) A. J. VAN DUZEE, *Clerk*,  
U. S. Circuit Court,  
Northern District of Iowa

(SEAL) of  
Clerk of the United States  
Supreme Court

The hearing on the above order was held in Dubuque November 5th and 6th and a temporary injunction was awarded the company.<sup>29</sup>

With the announcement of the temporary restraining order the "new employees" set out to see the town on Sunday afternoon, October 26th. As this was the first time any large number of them had appeared on the streets "they were the observed as well as observers." Undoubtedly many more would have left the shops had they had suitable clothes and the weather been milder. No trouble occurred and it was predicted they would soon be patronizing the stores. However, "there was not the most cordial feeling imaginable between the two bunches of workmen." Three days before this the foreman of the boilershop had been attacked by two men as he was going home from work. The company offered one hundred dollars reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the assailants, but no one was apprehended.<sup>30</sup>

Another incident relating to the injunction and the only one brought to court occurred October 31st. A blacksmith who had returned to work was accosted by a blacksmith's helper still out on strike. The latter pointed a shotgun at the blacksmith and said, "You are a . . . of a scab!" No fight occurred but the blacksmith

<sup>29</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Nov. 6, 7, Dec. 14, 1907.

<sup>30</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 25, 27, 1907.

charged his assailant with intent to commit murder. This charge was later modified to assault when it was found the gun was not loaded. The defendant was fined fifty dollars and costs or fifteen days in jail. Being unable to pay the fine he was taken to the Fayette county jail in West Union. While still in jail he was summoned to appear before the U. S. circuit court in Dubuque for violating the injunction.<sup>31</sup>

### RUMORS OF RIOTING IN OELWEIN

At the citizens' meeting anxiety had been expressed over "the impending danger to the city if the strike continues." In reply, one of the strikers said, "Oelwein is not in any jeopardy as a consequence of the strike. . . . It will not result in any injury to the city." This proved correct. Oelwein experienced no riots or big fights.<sup>32</sup>

Rumors of riots and lawlessness originated frequently in out-of-town newspapers. The local editor was constantly on the alert for the source of such rumors. When he discovered one he went out of his way to deny it and then criticize the paper. On September 30th he declared: "Notwithstanding false reports that have gone out from this city relative to riots and battles, there has been little trouble in the city, and the order has been nearly perfect when it is considered about a thousand men are out on strike." Three days later he called attention to an article in a St. Paul newspaper which, in his estimation, tended to show Oelwein "as an armed camp."<sup>33</sup>

Armed guards, sheriffs, city and county officials, and property owners generally are intensely interested in preventing lawlessness among the striking machinists, boilermakers, and wood workers now on strike at the C.G.W. shops here. The streets are now crowded with idle men and there are rumors of threats and bad feeling among the strikers is noticed. Arrests were made yesterday for disturbance.

<sup>31</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Nov. 1, 2, 8, 1907.

<sup>32</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 23, 25, 26, 27, 30, Oct. 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 18, 19, 21, 27, Nov. 2, 6, 7, 1907.

<sup>33</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 30, 1907; *The St. Paul Dispatch*, reprinted in the *Oelwein Register*, Oct. 2, 1907.



Robinson replied:<sup>34</sup>

Here is a big pipe dream. . . . The fact of the matter is that the streets of Oelwein are as peaceful as at any time in the history of the city. The strikers are quiet, and are not attempting to mix with the non-union men. The arrests and threatening trouble was largely in the mind of the man who sent the dispatch and possibly he had a brainstorm.

Again, on October 8th the editor denied rumors. To quote:<sup>35</sup>

#### SOME FALSE RUMORS POSITIVELY DENIED

Oelwein is quiet and there are not riots or hostile demonstrations in the city. It seems that some of the windjammers of the surrounding territory have drawn on their imagination to depict a condition of affairs here similar to that in the big strike in Chicago some years ago. But the stories are without foundation in fact. They are mostly hot air stories written by space writers who hitched on 'Oelwein, Ia.' to the screed and then gave rein to their imaginations. There has been no rioting, militia, or state of armed seige in this city during the past month. True, there is a bitter feeling between the men who have been employed in the shops, and the non-union men who have taken their places, in part, and are lodged in the shops but that does not extend to those who come into the city from surrounding towns. It is just as safe for people coming into the city, and attending to business as it ever was. A non-union man working in the shops who comes over town and drifts into certain places may meet trouble. But for other people visiting the Hub City it is as safe as on the sunny side of the main street in Stanley.

Throughout the strike similar rumors continued and were denied.<sup>36</sup>

Four incidents of a minor nature that occurred in Oelwein during the strike might be mentioned. On September 29th a Great Western detective, in town, was hit on the head with a rock. On the evening of October 3rd a guard was in town and got into an argument with "some citizens." Thinking he was in danger he pulled a gun. He was arrested and fined twenty-five dollars and costs. On November 4th a man from out of town was arrested for drunkenness and fined five dollars and costs.

<sup>34</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 2, 1907.

<sup>35</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 8, 1907.

<sup>36</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 9, 11, Nov. 2, 1907.

He explained that he came to Oelwein thinking that he was to cook for a group of sportsmen. On arrival he learned that he was to cook for the "scabs" and refused. To forget his misfortune he got drunk. On the evening of December 5th one of the guards was arrested for drunkenness. He was fined ten dollars and costs. He told Judge Porter that "things were pretty dull over in the shops" and that he came to town "to have a whirl."<sup>37</sup>

### EFFECTS OF STRIKE ON STRIKERS

Being out of work while on strike affected the shop men in different ways. One man took his own life. Otto Heinze, a fifty year old machinist, became despondent after failing to find work elsewhere and on November 4th committed suicide. Later, the widow explained: "He had often said that he felt like taking his life, being out of work. He had worried a great deal over the strike. He's got letters stating he is too old and that they could not give him a job. . . ." Fellow machinists made up a purse of nearly three hundred dollars for the widow and five children. Further, Heinze's union insurance paid her two thousand dollars.<sup>38</sup>

Heinze's suicide was the exception. During the early days of the strike, when it was felt that an agreement would soon be reached, most of the men on strike attended union meetings regularly. But, by the end of four weeks when it was evident that neither the strikers nor the company was going to give in many of the men left Oelwein. On October 10th it was reported that one-third were gone and by November 2nd, half. To accommodate those wishing to leave, the C.G.W. advanced its October pay day one week. Unlike Heinze, the machinist, all the boilermakers were offered jobs by other roads, namely: the Rock Island, Illinois Central, and the Northwestern. Undoubtedly this accounted for many of them leaving Oelwein. Of those remaining, some passed the

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<sup>37</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 30, Oct. 4, 5, Dec. 6, 1907.

<sup>38</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Nov. 4, 5, 1907.

time by going hunting while other worked around their homes.<sup>39</sup>

Only one activity of a social nature was held during the strike. This was a Thanksgiving day dinner and program given by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Boilermakers' and Boilermakers' Helpers' Union for the members and their families. The dinner was served at noon to over two hundred people. Joseph Butler spoke in place of J. E. Vannest, president of the union, who was unable to attend because of sickness in his family. The Marshall orchestra, aided by May Morrow, vocalist, furnished the music and the afternoon was spent in dancing and singing. A lunch was served at 6:30 and the dancing and visiting continued. Before departing for their homes they distributed the left-over food to the "needy of the city."<sup>40</sup>

Although the machinists and boilermakers, who had started the strike, stood firm in their demands, other shop employees on sympathy strike were anxious to get back to work. On October 18th, the thirty-fourth day of the strike, the car men voted to quit the strike and return to work. Within four days more than sixty were back on the job, according to Master Mechanic Walter P. Chrysler. Also, several machinists' apprentices, painters, and tin smiths were working. On October 24th it was reported that most of the car men, painters, and blacksmiths had applied for their former jobs. It was predicted that even the machinists and boilermakers would soon be back in the shops. With the opening of the new dining hall and kitchen on October 28th, the paint shops were vacated as eating and sleeping quarters. These shops were re-opened and many painters re-employed.<sup>41</sup>

### THE STRIKE BROKEN

Eight weeks after the car men voted to quit the strike the machinists accepted the company's offer of a three

<sup>39</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 19, 24, 29, Oct. 9, 10, 15, 1907.

<sup>40</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Nov. 29 1907.

<sup>41</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Oct. 18, 22, 24, 25, 27, 1907.

and one-half cent raise. The strike was considered broken on December 14th even though the boilermakers had not accepted the company's terms. Over forty per cent of the machinists were re-hired immediately; others employed as vacancies occurred.<sup>42</sup>

Not only striking shop employees left Oelwein during the strike, but also C.G.W. officials. On November 28th Goodell resigned as general superintendent to become superintendent of the middle division on the Northern Pacific. On December 20th J. E. Chisholm resigned as general master mechanic.<sup>43</sup>

### C.G.W. IN RECEIVERSHIP

"The strike was won . . . but the damage had been done!" Equipment had been tied up three months and the earnings of the company had decreased sharply. Less than a month after the strike ended the Great Western was in the hands of receivers.<sup>44</sup>

Receivership was inevitable. To understand its causes one must review Stickney's financial policies. Sixteen years earlier he had organized the C.G.W. solely on a stock basis. In permitting no mortgage on the property he figured the company would be "bankruptcy-proof." However, Great Western stock failed to sell as he had planned. Beginning in 1895, and continuing in the years following, Stickney had sold debenture stock on the London market. In order to attract English finance it was given preference over all other C.G.W. stock. As described by Stickney:<sup>45</sup>

It partakes of the nature of both stocks and bonds . . . it has a lien upon the income of the railway for its interest. As a stock

<sup>42</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Dec. 14, 1907; the *Cedar Rapids Tribune*, Jan. 31, 1908, reprinted in the *Oelwein Register*, Feb. 27, 1908; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and Iron Ship Builders and Helpers of America, *Journal*, Feb., 1908; Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>43</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Nov. 29, 30, Dec. 20, 1907.

<sup>44</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Jan. 8, 9, 1908; I.C.C., *op. cit.*, p. 272; Stickney, *op. cit.*

<sup>45</sup>Craig, "Great Western Builds Oelwein Shops, 1894-99," *op. cit.*, pp. 101-104; Stickney, A. B., *A Short History of the Finances of the C.G.W. Ry. Co.* 1899, pp. 5-6; Bogart, Ernest L., "Alpheus Beede Stickney," *Dictionary of American Biography*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 15-116; C.G.W. Ry. Co., *Corp. Rec.*, Vol. 1, pp. 1-12; editorial, "C.G.W. Finances," *The Railway Age*, Mar. 3, 1899, p. 146, and Aug. 13, 1897, pp. 658-659; editorial, "Action of C.G.W. Directors," *The Railway and Engineering Review*, Feb. 18, 1899, p. 94, and editorial, "Pres. Stickney's Western Trunk Line Railway Without a Mortgage," Mar. 4, 1899, p. 122; I.C.C., *op. cit.*, p. 272.



it participates in the management in all respects the same as other stocks. . . . Like a bond, debenture stock bears a fixed rate of interest which must be paid semi-annually. . . . It is a perpetual security, not terminable like a bond by lapse of time, and the rate of interest cannot be cut down by default, foreclosure, and reorganization.

In this way money was obtained for purchasing new equipment, improving the right-of-way, and even building the Oelwein shops. Through these expenditures Stickney hoped to increase the earning power of the "Maple Leaf." However, the rate of increase never rose in proportion to the amount of money spent on the road.

It has been pointed out that the strike resulted in a sharp decrease in the company's earnings. It also increased the extra-ordinary expenses for the second half of 1907 by \$133,000. It was clear that the interest due March, 1908, on the debenture stock, totaling \$6,000,000, could not be met. This stock had already an accrued debt of \$8,500,000. The total indebtedness of the company was \$12,500,000. Stickney went to London and on January 8, 1909, asked the debenture stockholders to postpone the interest payments. They refused and voted the C.G.W. be put into the hands of receivers so that the property could be mortgaged. Later Stickney recalled: "A great majority of the noteholders were perfectly willing to extend the time of the notes, but some of the holders could not be reached, and it was uncertain what they might do. The committee thought it best, under the circumstances, to place the property in control of the court during the time necessary to issue first mortgage bonds and sell them." A cable to this effect was sent to the directors in St. Paul. The following morning their attorney, Frank Kellogg, met with Judge Sanborn of the U. S. circuit court in St. Paul. That afternoon, January 9, 1909, Kellogg made formal application for the receivership. The application was accepted and filed. Stickney and Charles A. S. Smith were ap-

pointed as receivers and Kellogg as their attorney. Kellogg explained the receivership as follows:<sup>46</sup>

The receivership is not the result of any single creditor or stockholder, but has been taken after careful consideration of all parties interested, many of the creditors, and the board of directors. The immediate reason for the receivership was the failure to obtain an extension of the notes now due and coming due during 1908 which were given for money borrowed for improvements and betterments of the property. The company has spent \$19,000,000 in the past ten years . . . in general improvements and betterments of the railway, and has outstanding notes for this purpose to the amount of about \$10,000,000. During the last spring a plan for financing the road was agreed upon by the board of directors and the [London] finance committee, but owing to the stringency in the money market and other unforeseen causes, they have been unable to carry it out.

The earnings of the company were very materially decreased during the autumn by a strike at the shops, which tied up the equipment. The strike was won by the company, but the damage had been done. The receivership will be temporary pending the time required to carry through the plan of financing the road. . . .

During the next four years \$1,653,413.17 will fall due. \$54,000 of notes have already gone to protest, and during 1908 \$3,342,545 will fall due and be defaulted. If the creditors were to levy on the company's property, it would result in tying up interstate commerce and the road would be torn to pieces. A receivership seemed necessary to protect all interests equally, the stockholders and the public as well.

Oelwein received the news of the receivership with regret. Although the people of Oelwein had not purchased much Great Western stock, they looked on the road with favor, mainly because of their liking for Stickney and the income it brought to Oelwein. Their feeling is indicated by the following: "If the road is in financial straits it will not be because President Stickney has failed to do his full duty. He has been 'instant in season' to promote the welfare of the road, and the success to which it has attained since the small beginning of years ago has been largely the result of his unselfish efforts." In spite of the receivership, Oelwein

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<sup>46</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Jan. 8, 9, 16, 1908; Aug. 21, 1909; Bogart, *op. cit.*

residents were confident the Great Western would still be made a success.<sup>47</sup>

The people of Oelwein presumed, and correctly, that the "Maple Leaf" would continue to run. When interviewed, O. Cornelison, the new general superintendent, stated that not only would train service continue but that considerable new equipment was to be purchased and all the old overhauled. He said that he understood the above expenses could be paid for while the company was in receivership with the money that would ordinarily be used for interest payments. In reality, the money was to be obtained from the sale of first mortgage bonds yet to be issued and sold.<sup>48</sup>

Before Great Western property could be mortgaged it had to be inventoried. The inventory was made during August, 1908, under the supervision of a committee representing the English creditors.<sup>49</sup>

Meanwhile, business conditions were improving. In September the company was doing a good business and as the weeks passed business continually improved. The reasons were a huge eastern movement of grain resulting from a bumper crop in the northwest and heavier loads of manufactured products. The Oelwein shops were as busy as ever in their history. In view of the improved business conditions, the English creditors on December 5th voted to postpone the reorganization of the company. No mention was made of mortgaging the property. They evidently figured that, with their debenture stock having a preference over other C.G.W. stock, the Great Western might still become a paying proposition for them if not for other stockholders. These were the same men who had demanded the property be put in the hands of receivers so that it might be mortgaged and they get their money.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup>*Des Moines Capital*, reprinted in *Oelwein Register*, Jan. 10, 1908; *Oelwein Register*, Jan. 16, 1908; editorial, "Annual Report of C.G.W. by Pres. Stickney," *The Railroad Gazette*, Sept. 8, 1899, pp. 629-630, and Sept. 7, 1900, p. 597.

<sup>48</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Jan. 16, 18, 1908.

<sup>49</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Apr. 9, 16, Aug. 28, 1908.

<sup>50</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Sept. 2, 5, Oct. 21, Dec. 5, 1908.

With the announcement from London of the proposed delay in reorganizing the company, C.G.W. stockholders holding common and preferred "A" and "B" stock began making inquiries as to whether or not the property was ever to be mortgaged and the company reorganized. Their inquiries were answered March 1, 1909, by a statement from the receivers, as follows:<sup>51</sup>

From present indications it will be at least one year and possibly two before the receivership of the C.G.W. Railway is terminated and funds are available for the payment of different claims, and further offering to buy claims if they can be bought at a satisfactory discount. The receivership of the C.G.W. Railway was created at the instance of and for the benefit of the creditors, and as receivers we feel it our duty to advise the creditors that we understand satisfactory progress is being made looking to the reorganization of the property. We cannot state positively when the receivership will terminate, but we feel it should not extend beyond the present year and that it may be wound up in less time. The creditors should also be advised that the value of the property in the hands of the receivers is so much greater than the total claims against the estate, that, in our judgment, there is no question but that the claims of all creditors will be paid in full, with interest. We have deemed it our duty to address this communication to the creditors so they will be fully informed.

After the property was put in the hands of the receivers the sale of the C.G.W. was rumored several times. First, in April, it was the Canadian Pacific or the "Soo" Line who had bought it. In August it was a syndicate formed by the English creditors. In September it was the Canadian Pacific again, and in January, 1909, the Northwestern.<sup>52</sup>

#### C.G.W. REORGANIZED AND SOLD

Tentative reorganization of the Great Western was rumored January 5, 1909, and officially confirmed two weeks later. As pointed out above, on March 1st, the receivers admitted that they did not know when the

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<sup>51</sup>Smith, Charles, and Burt, Horace G., receivers for C.G.W. Ry. Co., letter to stock holders, Mar. 1, 1909, reprinted in the *Oelwein Register*, Mar. 6, 1909.

<sup>52</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Apr. 16, Aug. 8, Sept. 22, Oct. 21, Dec. 5, 1908; Jan. 9, 1909.



receivership would end but hoped that it might be terminated within a year. Two weeks later the plan of reorganization was completed. An arrangement was made with certain financiers on Wall street, New York City, by which the company was to be refinanced and the property rehabilitated. \$60,000,000 worth of first mortgage fifty-year four per cent gold bonds were to be issued and sold. Not until July 26th did Oelwein learn that for a period of five years the Great Western was to be controlled by a syndicate formed by J. P. Morgan & Company.<sup>53</sup>

News of the proposed reorganization of the C.G.W. was welcomed in Oelwein. The people knew that if the Great Western could again be made to prosper Oelwein would likewise benefit. The local editor declared: "With the big strike, the presidential election, and the C.G.W. in the hands of receivers the prospects of Oelwein have not been as rosy as might be desired. Now with the strike a thing of the past, with the presidential election over, and business reviving, and with the C.G.W. placed on a solid financial basis, the 'sun of renewed prosperity' is already above the eastern horizon."<sup>54</sup>

Within a month from the time it was learned that the C.G.W. was to be controlled by J. P. Morgan & Company, the mortgage was foreclosed. On August 21st, in the West Side Freight House in St. Paul, the property was sold at auction to the sole bidder, J. P. Morgan & Company, for \$12,000,000. The Morgan syndicate held the property until September 1st, when it was turned over to the new company—the Chicago Great Western Railroad Company. This company had been organized August 11th under the laws of the state of Illinois and incorporated the 24th under the laws of the state of Iowa. The new company was capitalized at \$96,000,000.

<sup>53</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Jan. 5, 19, Mar. 6, 17, 1909; "Plans for C.G.W. Ry. Reorganization," *United States Investor*, Aug., 1909, reprinted in the *Oelwein Register*, July 26, 1909; I.C.C., *op. cit.*, App. II, pp. 203-04. In 1897 and again in 1901 it had been reported that the Morgan interests had secured control of the C.G.W. Later this was denied. *The Railway Age*, Aug. 27, 1897, pp. 694-695; Mar. 29, 1901, p. 394, and July 5, 1901, p. 16.

<sup>54</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Mar. 17, 1909.

Figuring 800 miles in the system this made the capitalization approximately \$120,000 per mile. Under the old company it had been \$140,000. Two things of interest are noted about the incorporation fee. First, Morgan's personal check was used to pay the fee. Second, the charge was \$96,000. This amount was figured on the basis of one-tenth of one per cent of the new company's capitalized value.<sup>55</sup>

The new company was incorporated under the name of Chicago Great Western Railroad Company, changing only the word "railway" to "railroad." In the case of the trademark, however, it was changed from the "Maple Leaf Route" to the "Corn Belt Route."<sup>56</sup>

Before the sale it was stated that the general offices of the new company would be located in St. Paul as had been the general offices of the old. However, four days after the sale it was announced they were to be in Chicago. The change was made by October 3rd. Most of the offices were situated in Grand Central station; the remainder in the Harvester building. Following the completion of the Peoples' Gas building the following May C.G.W.R.R. offices were united in that building.<sup>57</sup>

The people of Oelwein were encouraged with the news of the sale of the "Maple Leaf." The influence of the "Morgan millions, and the immense credit and resources of the Morgan railroad interests" were noted within a very short time. The roadbed was improved, new equipment purchased, and all the old rolling stock overhauled. The latter was important to Oelwein in that several hundred new men were employed at the shops and the shops themselves were soon enlarged.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>55</sup>*Oelwein Register*, July 23, Aug. 13, 21, 25, 27, 1909; Aug. 22, 1910; I.C.C., *op. cit.*, p. 141; Stand. Corp. Rec., *op. cit.*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 6, p. 447.

<sup>56</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Aug. 25, 27, 1909; June 25, July 16, 1910; Joyce, Patrick H., president, C.G.W.R.R. Co., *pamphlet*, Aug. 27, 1934; *Encyclopedia Americana*, *op. cit.*

<sup>57</sup>*Oelwein Register*, Aug. 13, 25, Sept. 1, Oct. 4, 1909.

<sup>58</sup>*Deyo, op. cit.*, "History of C.G.W.R.R. Co.," July 10, 1939, "The C.G.W.-R.R.," Nov. 3, 1941; the *Dubuque Times-Journal*, reprinted in the *Oelwein Register*, Dec. 30, 1909; *Oelwein Register*, Aug. 25, 30, Sept. 20, Oct. 2, 3, 1909; Jan. 29, Feb. 5, Apr. 11, 18, May 13, 1910; Anniversary Edition, 1923; Robinson, Fred S., "Oelwein, Iowa," *The Maize*, Dec., 1914, p. 48; Fitch, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, p. 317.

## GUE, RUSSELL, THORINGTON

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Neither the three names singly nor as a group arouse quick interest to the average Iowan in Iowa's Centennial year—Benjamin F. Gue, Edward C. Russell and James Thorington. It was not always so. These names loomed large on the political picture of early Iowa. The group helped to direct the political currents in their day and some of the currents were swift and dangerous. They strongly impressed themselves upon their times and their influence is felt even today.

Gurney C. Gue, son of the first named of the trio is still living at Merrick, Long Island, interested in eugenics even as he was sixty years ago when associated with John H. Wallace in the genealogy of trotting horses. He has also delved into family history and compiled the pedigrees of his mother and his father, tracing every line back to the immigrant ancestors where possible. The father, Lieutenant Governor Gue, it will be recalled, was associated with Mr. Aldrich in starting off the great work of the State Historical department and later published a History of Iowa. From Gurney Gue we have some of the old letters preserved by his father. They serve to throw light on what was in the minds of leading men at the time. Their controversial aspects have faded out by lapse of time and they are given simply as contributions to history.

The three became associated when all were young in political affairs when Scott and other counties of eastern Iowa were dominant in state affairs. B. F. Gue was a farmer who never lost his interest in agriculture, became a state senator and lieutenant governor, helped the State Agricultural college to get started and edited farm journals. E. C. Russell was a lifelong editor and was best known as editor of the *Davenport Gazette*. James Thorington was a member of congress for the

northern Iowa district and active in state politics. All three were in at the formation of the Republican party.

#### THORINGTON TO GUE

The year 1857 was one of great historic interest in Iowa. The people of the new state broke old bonds, adopted a new constitution, freed the spirit of enterprise, elected a new kind of governor, located the state capital in the central valley, and set out to build railroads and factories and cities. James Thorington took over direction of the newly assembled political group rising to power. He had been a Carolina man who had hunted and trapped in the far west before becoming a lawyer at Davenport. His brilliant career in congress was cut short by the fact that he lived too near the border of the district. He served as sheriff of his county and President Grant gave him a job as U. S. consul to Aspinwall. The big issue of the day was that of getting the new and better constitution adopted. Mr. Thorington in his letter to Mr. Gue indicates his deep concern over this issue. The letter follows:

Davenport, Iowa, July 10, 1857

At the request of the State Central Committee of Iowa (Messrs. Samuel S. (J) Kirkwood, William Penn Clarke, George D. Woodin, Iowa City, Henry O'Connor, S. Muscatine, and Hiram Price, of Davenport) I have consented to take charge of the correspondence of that Committee and to act as Secretary.

The most important political matter coming before the people of Iowa at the ensuing August election is the adoption or rejection of the Constitution framed by the Constitutional Convention which assembled at Iowa City last winter.

The adoption of this Constitution is of more importance to the Republican party in Iowa than the members of the party are generally aware. It is unquestionably a Republican measure—got up by Republican Legislature; put forth by a Republican Convention. Now it rests with the Republicans of Iowa to say whether they will ignore their own acts or act in concert to sustain a measure that will aid to sustain them as a party, and which is far preferable to the present Constitution.

If this question was debatable the so-called Democratic party have planted themselves against it as a party measure. The



defect (defeat?) of our ticket this spring was through our own supineness as much as from any other cause. Today that party is bolder from their success than from any other cause. A defeat now on our part will generally be regarded as a victory on their part, and will have a telling effect on the next general election to come off in Iowa. Let me solicit, in the name of the Committee—on behalf of the Republican party—on behalf of equal rights, that the opportunity now presented be embraced to rid the State of an odious instrument that has and will ever continue to cramp the energies of a State like ours. Section 10, on page 5, of the Constitution, reads as follows:

Section 10. In all criminal prosecutions and in cases involving the life or liberty of an individual, the accused shall have a right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury; to be informed of the accusation against him; to have a copy of the same when demanded; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory processes for his witnesses, and to have the assistance of counsel.

Which (section) the administration papers pronounce UNCONSTITUTIONAL as conflicting with the Constitution of the United States. If we had no other reason for voting for it, this section alone should be sufficient to determine our action. We are told by the remnant of that MIGHTY PARTY, whose light is now flickering in the socket before its final extinction on FREE SOIL, that "an individual accused of crime involving life or liberty shall not have a right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury."

The gist of the whole matter is that a negro might not be returned to his master and the question of the Negro's freedom be tried by a jury of slave-owners. We are to jeopardize all our rights to life and liberty secured to us by a speedy and public trial before an impartial jury, through a sickly political opinion of the slave owner's rights. Let us therefore brand this as false, and be free in our State Government, if it is a mockery by a General Government as administered by the powers that be.

See that there are tickets in every township in your county. I herewith enclose a few as specimens. You will perceive that the candidates' names for the several offices in your county are to be filled. When you have access to printing offices of course it will be advisable to have an abundance printed, leaving no blanks.

JAMES THORINGTON

#### RUSSELL TO GUE

In the year 1859, the town of Le Claire had 2,500 of the total 25,000 in the county and was to be reckoned

with in all matters. The new leaders of that date who were engaged in whipping the free soil and free enterprise elements into the semblance of a political party were establishing newspapers here and there to become educators. Edward C. Russell established one such publication at Le Claire and sought support quite naturally from Mr. Gue, who had been a member of the convention that had formally established the new Republican party. It is interesting to note that associated with him as printer was William H. Fleming, who years afterwards was secretary to several governors and whose last years were spent in the State Historical building writing his reminiscences.

The Le Claire newspaper did not long survive. Editor Russell wrote to Mr. Gue:

Le Claire, Iowa, March 17, 1859

I thank you for the interest you manifest in the *Republic* and can fully appreciate the difficulty you speak of in obtaining subscribers for a newspaper in a time of severe pecuniary trials. And because you are interested in our effort to maintain a Republican paper here allow me to state a few facts to you which would not under other circumstances be divulged.

When, at the earnest request of several Republicans here, I assumed the editorial control, I knew nothing of newspaper publishing. Now I know just what it takes to support a paper, and how well the labor on it can be paid. The *Republic* was started free of debt, its proprietor is a responsible man, possessed of some property, and does not seek to make money by the operation; he only asks that the journal thus published shall be made to pay the expense of paper and employees. It has been published three months and has not done this. The proprietor (Dr. J. Van Horn) works the press and sets the type, devoting some eight or ten hours each day to that labor. Mr. William H. Fleming devotes all his time to setting type and overseeing the printing. For this the Doctor gets nothing, and Mr. Fleming less than half journeyman's wages.

I am working at my trade (carpentering) by day to obtain a living for my family, and editing the paper at night for the public gratuitously. When we ask the Republicans of Scott County to make a little sacrifice to aid the *Republic*, do we ask too much? You are already aware that this township is not so sure for

Republicanism that it can safely be left to the especial care of Laurel Summers and others of that ilk. You are also aware that an earnest journal here located can, if properly supported, exert a strong influence on the vote of the northern half of the county. The *Davenport Gazette* is the only Republican journal in Scott County. It is undoubtedly an ably conducted newspaper, but it is firmly established, and the farmers of Winfield, Liberty and neighborhood could well afford to bestow their patronage on a more needy journal, if indeed, they could not afford to take both.

The *Republic* was started under the pledge of continuance for six months. It will be published for that term, pay or no pay. Whether it shall aid in rolling up a triumphant vote for Freedom and Humanity next October, or cease to exist at the expiration of another three months, rests with the Republicans of this and adjoining townships to decide.

You will see from the above that we cannot depute one of our number to canvass the county for subscribers, but must rely on the voluntary efforts of our friends, who, we trust will, if they can without neglecting their own interests, do something to swell our subscription list.

Trusting you will excuse the freedom which thus addresses you, I remain,

Yours respectfully,

E. RUSSELL

#### REWARDS FOR POLITICAL SERVICE

One day in November, 1860, the American people awoke to a realization that a political revolution had made great changes in the national picture. For the first time in many years all federal officeholders in the states and territories would come from a new group. The discovery was shocking. Distribution of federal patronage would stem from an Illinois man who had just been elected president. Mr. Gue was a member of the Iowa legislature. Mr. Thorington was sheriff of the county. Mr. Russell had closed his shop at Le Claire and was at work in Davenport. His employer seems to have been already selected for next postmaster. He wrote to his old friend Mr. Gue as follows:

Davenport, Iowa, November 30, 1860

You will please accept my sincere thanks for proffered aid in my behalf for any position to which I may aspire. Inasmuch as you have introduced the matter allow me to make a candid statement and thus "define my position." During the campaign I had

no thought of office or position for myself. Being placed in a position where nearly the whole management of the campaign in this county devolved on me, I endeavored to perform the duties of the onerous trust with promptness and fidelity. If I labored with zeal it was because actuated by the same earnest desire which has been the key note of all my political action since first I had a vote, and before. Loathing and abhorring American slavery from my very soul, I have longed to see the day when by emphatic and overwhelming majorities the people of the free North, at least, should place the seal of their condemnation on the system and on the man and party by whom it has been so long sustained. The day so long desired HAS come; and if my efforts have contributed to the glory of the triumph in this county, I am sufficiently rewarded in the consciousness that those efforts are appreciated and commended by those whose respect I value.

Grateful for their manifestations of interest in my future, my reply to all has been that I was not a candidate for any office, either under Federal appointment or otherwise. And this, not because indifferent to the honors or emoluments of office, but because unwilling to swell the already crowded ranks of aspirants for office, and preferring rather to wait until the voice of associates and fellow laborers should find the place which in their judgment I ought to fill, instead of obtaining any position by my own seeking. If in process of time some suitable place thus offered—well: if not, still well, rather than to crowd myself before the public as a candidate for honor or profit.

Now, however, my position is somewhat changed. Recently, and since I have been working for Charles H. Eldridge, that gentleman (at the suggestion of his friends, I believe) quite unexpectedly to me, offered the Deputyship of the Post Office for my acceptance should he obtain it. This offers a good living for self and family at the cost of unremitting industry and application. It is all I need and is accepted. If therefore you or any other friends are disposed to assist me, by giving influence and aid to Mr. Eldridge they will do so very effectually. As yet I have solicited no man's support for C. E. on my own account. Since, however, you kindly express a desire to serve me, you will allow me to request your influence in behalf of the application of Mr. Eldridge for the office he desires. A letter of recommendation to the President, signed as a member of the Legislature will have considerable weight. I have written thus freely of myself and much more fully than under other circumstances would be justifiable because feeling that you will receive the above as intended and pardon the apparent egotism.

Respectfully yours,  
EDWARD RUSSELL



## THE HEAT OF WAR TIME

Then, as now, war time produced much heat and angry words were heard and repeated. Mr. Gue had kept in touch with friends in Le Claire and a letter to him from an old friend discloses a little of the excessive bitterness of the time. The letter follows:

Le Claire, May 9, 1861

Hon. B. F. Gue, Dear Sir:

I take the liberty of posting you a little in regard to the Democratic nominee for representative, Mr. J. M. Talmage of this place. He has until within a very few days avowed the strongest secession principles, fully sympathizing with the rebels. Of the southern states, soon after the proclamation of Mr. Lincoln was issued, he made the remark that "he was ashamed of his country and wished he had never been born in America." I hope the loyal citizens of Scott county will on the 15th of May express in unmistakable terms their unmitigated contempt for all such sentiments. I hope the farmers will see the importance of polling as heavy a vote as possible on that day. I will see that LeClaire township is thoroughly canvassed—will you have the time to do the same in your township? I have no doubt about the result of the election, but I would like to see this treason (what else can we call it?) so effectually killed that there will be no resurrection. Our country needs the moral as well as physical support of all our union-loving men. May old Scott county show an undivided front on Wednesday next and seal forever the political doom of all the traitors within her borders. Yours "for the Union one and inseparable."

JOS. H. WHITE

P. S.: Mr. Talmage with the president and several members of the so-called Democratic convention of yesterday from Le Claire rejoiced openly over the fate of Lt. Sorrenten.

C. FOSTER

## DISILLUSIONMENT ON THE TARIFF

The story of what happened in the next quarter century would make a library of good books. The Union had been saved from dissolution. The star of empire was on its way to the westward coasts. Reconstruction troubles had been endured, but left deep scars. Iowa was becoming industrialized. The transcontinental trains were long

and heavy. An Iowa statesman (Kasson) had written into the platform on which Lincoln had been elected a promise as to the tariff that schedules should be so adjusted as "to encourage the development of the industrial interest of the whole country." But Iowa had more corn and pork for sale than tin cans and pig iron. It was becoming hard to go along with those who had used the tariff schedules to become barriers. At one time, or perhaps more than once, the Iowa Republicans had put "tariff for revenue only" in their state platform, then later called this "free trade." Russell had long been the editor of the *Democrat-Gazette*. Que had been writing for farm papers. The national convention held in Minneapolis where President Harrison was renominated seemed to them to have stretched the protective tariff idea beyond all reason. Some who had participated in formation of the Republican party took a position "on the fence." Mr. Que had written to Mr. Russell and the latter responded with the following, which throws a bright light on the political mix-up of that day:

Minneapolis, Minnesota, Aug. 31, 1888

PLEASE Sir: Your kind favor of the 17th came to me as a very welcome messenger, and we were grateful to my feelings because easily understood. It is indeed pleasing to know that in the position I have been compelled to take, under a sense of loyalty to conviction and sincerely in mission to the present Presidential campaign, not refined associates like yourself approve and commend instead of censure.

The ringing words of your generous letter are to me as echoes from a memorable and noble past. They sound as did the utterances from your lips nearly thirty years ago, when, in Secret County, your voice was raised in denunciation of the "Trust-deed" processes by which our Iowa farmers were then being robbed and "squeezed." One in Western Iowa, was held the mass convention made effective largely by aid of your words and your enthusiasm for the cause of justice. A voice, and greater, because a man's word, is more and more powerful, and, secondarily of itself, creates "good" process and accomplishes the many for the enrichment of the few. Some of us have long contended against yet too frequently been constrained to excuse and condone the growth and encroachments of that combination of wealth and arrogance.

At last, we are now driven to choose between abject servitude to this monster of evil, or unequivocal resistance to its further spread. Forthwith it is discovered that we are renegades and traitors; that we are bought by "British gold"; that we are emissaries of the Cobden Club, and that we are lawful targets of detraction and abuse. As against and in comparison with a whole million of words from such sources, a single sentence from your epistle is as Truth to Falsehood, Honesty to Villainy, common sense to driveling idiocy. So, I thank you heartily for your volunteered approval and cheer. It delights me, also, to know that you, too, are decided to vote in November directly in the line of your old-time faith. Greatly would it increase my pleasure could I see you face to face and with you take council in our effort to right by popular vote the gross injustice to Republicanism resulting from machine management and cooperation and monopolistic adroitness and greed.

At times since the Chicago convention met, I have wished myself again in Iowa, and there so situated as to be able to devote labor and voice to continuous advocacy of the real reform now just entered upon in the enactment by the House of the Mills bill. Their beginning of direct attack on the so-called "protective" principle is one that should enlist the support of honest friends of the masses in all our land. It seems to me that for such a support I could argue and plead from tribune to tribune, from stump to stump, from this date until the day of election, were not my time elsewhere demanded in the necessary pursuit of my business. The reform of the war-tariff abuse may well enlist our best endeavours.

In Boston a few weeks ago I attended the Republican ratification meeting in Tremont Temple. As a Republican demonstration—that is as a demonstration of devoted adherence to the "grand old party" that meeting was a veritable success. But the substance and form of the entire affair was, simply a presentation of the existing tariff as a sacred thing, to be continuously deified and unceasingly worshiped. To so exalt and adore was declared to be the "sole issue" of the campaign. THAT settled me. With the platform I had been utterly disgusted. The decree that all who would continue Republican must stand on that platform or none, challenged me to protest and revolt. Yet, I really wanted to find some sort of a decent excuse to vote the Republican ticket still. At first my thought was to emulate Horace Greeley in 1852—vote for the candidate but "spit upon the platform." But the course of Republican campaign leadership and utterances leave me no sort of chance or excuse for such a negation of principle by a positive adhesion to party. So, I have said so squarely, whenever occasion has demanded.

Well, Friend Gue, while we cannot clasp hands we will have our sentiments pulsating and our hands voting together. Ought we not to do more if we can? It is my purpose to answer, by action, affirmatively, if possible. At least with my pen in a small way. The *Democrat-Gazette* has asked me for a series of articles. As yet I have not entered upon the task. My business presses me very close. To at all neglect that is to ensure an increase of poverty that it were a sin to invite. But I will do the little I can soon. Cannot you aid, also? Your influence in Iowa is still maintained. Words from you will stir and enthuse many a one whose convictions are already on the side of tariff-reform. More, they would stimulate thought and provoke investigation on the part of others who are as yet disposed to vote with entrenched abuses and gross injustice only because they are ignorant of the real issues involved.

You and I have a profound satisfaction. We did our best to keep the party of our early love and earnest devotion from being made the servitor of the monopolists and money-grabbers. Senator Allison and others could tell you I often pleaded with them in person. Mr. Blaine could recall my long letter to him, availing myself of our personal relations, urging that he should use his best endeavor to prevent the very thing that has now happened—such a formulation of party profession and purpose must drive from the Republican ranks every intelligent friend of genuine tariff reform. But all has been of no avail. The fact is that Republican leaders have of late and now see only the interests of the speculative and money-getting crowd among whom Mr. Blaine has of late years found his chief associates. The Steve Elkins, the Phelps, the Jones, the Oliver, the Carnegie, the Jay Gould and the Pacific mail crew are not the men to care for the interests of the people. So, the people must and *will* repudiate the whole of them. Mr. Blaine has led the Republican party on the high road to perdition. To perdition it will go and ought. Again thanking you for your good letter.

Yours truly,  
EDWARD RUSSELL

These few letters with faded ink snatched from the litter of the attic gave but one side of the story, and it is unfortunate that the reverse letters are not available. They may serve to fill in some of the blanks that historians so often find necessary in their stories of nineteenth century events. In them were discussed the new constitution, the new party, the new industrial policy, the new America.



## CONSERVATION OF RECREATIONAL AREA

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### WHAT THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF CLEAR LAKE HAS ACCOMPLISHED

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By REMLEY J. GLASS

In the late thirties and the early forties, the need for the protection of recreational, hunting and fishing facilities in northern Iowa lakes and streams had become apparent to sportsmen and property owners in the vicinity of Clear Lake, as well as to residents and citizens of the state as a whole.

Artificial lakes were being created in many localities over the state. Game preserves were set up, state parks established, and arrangements made for fish and game breeding to restock the depleted streams and lakes and upland meadows of Iowa. In the years before the activities of the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake commenced, many enterprises for its benefit had been developed.

A state park of more than seventy acres had been located on the southeastern shore of Clear Lake in 1924 and 1925. Under the direction of the State Conservation Commission, a fine shelter house had been built of native wood and limestone, docks and bathing beaches prepared and the grounds themselves made ready for the influx of visitors which summer seasons brought to Clear Lake. In pre-war seasons, the annual park attendance was more than one hundred forty thousand and it seems probable that a greater number will utilize the increased park facilities in 1946.

During the passing years many property owners seemed to have forgotten just where their lot lines were located and had encroached upon the public streets, thereby cutting off access to the banks of the lake. To meet this situation, the Clear Lake city council had placed

rustic signs along the cottage covered shores of Clear Lake indicating where streets and alleys gave the public access to the lake.

However, it seemed to a group of representative citizens in north central Iowa that the "powers that be" in their efforts to establish new recreational centers had failed to recognize and preserve the potentialities of existing facilities, particularly those of Clear Lake. As a result of this feeling, a group of the leaders in cities and towns of that section first met at Mason City in December of 1940 to consider appropriate steps to preserve and protect Clear Lake, so that it might remain a benefit to this generation and those to come as it had been since James Dickirson and Joseph Hewitt built the first cabins on its shores in 1851.

#### INITIAL ORGANIZATION EFFECTED

After a number of meetings and much discussion, an organization was effected as all recognized the importance of the undertaking. For the years of 1941 and 1942, the officers of the Association selected were:

Dr. G. A. Bemis, Garner, president  
E. H. Wagner, Mason City, vice president  
Emil C. Tobsing, Mason City, secretary-treasurer.

while the first Board of Directors were:

C. E. Barnes, of Garner  
Theodore Wolfram, of Ventura  
Ira W. Jones, of Clear Lake  
Dr. H. C. Krueger, of Clear Lake  
M. F. Zack, of Mason City  
Leo Berry, of Mason City  
H. B. Farrer, of Mason City

An aggressive membership drive resulted in securing a representative group of members, and the nominal dues collected enabled the association to begin its activities.

Those first gatherings resulted in the incorporation of "The Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake" whose articles were filed on February 4, 1943.

In the summer of 1939 while Governor George Wilson was making Clear Lake Iowa's summer capital, the first Governor's Day celebration was held at Clear Lake, with parades on land and water, fireworks and a truly American summer celebration. Politicians met at the summer capital to settle the affairs of state and nation and to determine who would have the best chance for election in the fall. Political log-rolling had an equal place with aquaplaning and political fence-building with fishing and boating. In the succeeding years governors of Iowa have found Clear Lake to be especially adapted as a seat of summer government and Governor's Day became an increasingly important event in each summer season.

With the successful organization of the "Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake," its officers and committeemen took over the entertainment of governors, past, present, and future, not to mention members of the Conservation Commission, U. S. senators and representatives, state officials and members of the General Assembly. These three-day celebrations bring hundreds of visitors from all Iowa to Clear Lake to meet old friends and make new ones, to enjoy the recreational advantages of one of Iowa's finest summer resorts and to experience that hospitality for which north Iowa is noted.

The work of the "Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake" has not been entertaining governors and senators alone, but also has consisted of the arrangement for ponds for pike fingerlings in the nearby countryside, the protection of spawning grounds for all sorts of game fish, the procuring of public shooting grounds, and manifold other enterprises for the betterment of Clear Lake as a Sportsman's Paradise easily reached from all Iowa's cities and towns.

One of the groups which has contributed much to the effectiveness of this organization is the North Central Iowa Rod and Gun Club. Acting with them, the association was able to convince the Conservation Commission

of the desirability of constructing and maintaining in this area a rearing pond for the development of young pike. A forty-acre tract of land north of the city of Clear Lake met the requirements of such a purpose and had been purchased by the state. The rearing pond was constructed and in successful use until the shortages of materials and manpower during the war years stopped this activity.

Perhaps no one member of the association has done more for this particular project than that enthusiastic and successful fisherman, Frank C. Goodman of Mason City, though all the committeemen did their part. The name of Mr. Goodman is seldom mentioned without recalling the story told of him by a companion on northern fishing trips. Some of the group felt that sitting around a poker table for games of chance and other purposes were important elements of the vacation period, but Frank disagreed and in commenting on the situation, his friend observed, "Why, that so and so comes up here to fish!" No meeting of the association is complete without his friendly presence and words of advice and counsel.

#### RELIABLE MAP OF AREA AVAILABLE

An activity incidental to the association's membership drives has been the furnishing to each member a map of Clear Lake, carefully prepared under the direction of R. E. Robertson, Cerro Gordo county engineer in 1948. This map shows depths, channels, bars, reefs, and mossbeds, and indicates where the hopeful fisherman may expect to get various types of fish. Unfortunately, no guaranty of fishing success accompanied the map. A biological survey of Clear Lake was commenced by the State Conservation Commission in 1941 at the suggestion of the association but World War II prevented its completion.

The need for additional recreational areas and game and fishing preserves in and around Clear Lake were soon apparent to the citizens of north Iowa, and of course



to the members of the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake. This condition was brought to the attention of this State Conservation Commission, the Executive Council of Iowa and the state legislature. A committee composed of Charles E. Strickland, C. A. Knutson, and H. J. Bryant was appointed from the association membership to investigate possible sites, their availability, suitability, and the cost. It soon appeared that a sixty-acre tract of land belonging to the Gilbert B. McIntosh Estate and located on the north shore of Clear Lake, most nearly met the requirements. Negotiations were then undertaken for the acquisition of the land between Mrs. Rose M. McIntosh and her children on the one hand and the State of Iowa on the other with the committee as intermediary. The McIntoshes were one of the pioneer families of Clear Lake and cooperated in the utmost fairness with the state so that the land was purchased in July of 1943 for the reasonable sum of \$30,000.00.

Under the name of "McIntosh Woods," it became the second state park on the shores of Clear Lake. This beautiful wooded point of land partially separating the main body from the head of the lake was ideally suited to its purpose. For years, hunters had built their blinds on the sandbar to the south when the duck migrations took place, spawning areas for game fish bordered its shores and picnickers used its oak groves for their gatherings. Roads and paths have been constructed and today it is another natural beauty spot preserved for the people of Iowa through the generous cooperation of the McIntosh family with the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake.

The dedication of "McIntosh Woods," Iowa's seventy-sixth state park took place on August 12, 1944, during the sixth Annual Governor's Day celebration at Clear Lake. Dr. H. C. Krueger, president of the association, presided over the 2000 visitors at the ceremonies held on a wooded knoll overlooking Clear Lake to the east,

west and south. Fred J. Poyneer, chairman of the State Conservation Commission, made the formal presentation of the park to the State of Iowa and all Iowans, while Governor Bourke B. Hickenlooper accepted it on their behalf. Bands from nearby cities and towns were present while a group of WAVES from the Naval Training School at Cedar Falls added a truly nautical touch to the festivities.

Because of an economic situation well known to all of us, further development of the "McIntosh Woods" state park has been materially delayed, but the members of the Conservation Commission assure us that it is not forgotten. They promise that ere long that tract so ideally situated will be one of the finest of Iowa's state parks.

#### VENTURA MARSH A SHOOTING RESERVE

Another project for which the association presented a united and successful front was the acquisition of a considerable area around the head of the lake near Ventura to protect spawning areas along the shores of that marshy region, and also to create a public shooting reserve. These efforts began in 1940 and terminated in the purchase of 753 acres during the years 1941-1943 through the provisions of the Pittman-Robertson bill. Since that time, the committee in charge of that particular project have been very effective watch dogs preventing any activity which might impair the use of the tract for the intended purposes.

While not directly sponsored by the association, many of its members and their families are actively interested in the yacht races held on Saturday and Sunday during the summer season, when fleets of small craft skippered and manned—or girdled—sail around the various courses laid out by the Clear Lake Yacht Club to win the trophies offered by former commodores and interested members. Before the war curtailed gasoline and tires, groups of youthful sailors brought their boats from Okoboji and

Spirit Lake and from Minnesota lakes as well to contest with the nautical experts of Clear Lake in pretentious regattas. No one can appreciate the beauty of Clear Lake who has not seen the white sailed "X's" or "C's" well heeled over in a spanking breeze winging their way over the blue water against a distant background of cottages peeping through the green foliage along the shores. If you want to see American youth at its best and happiest, you should be present at the annual dinner given by the Club when the trophies are awarded.

In the judgment of its members and according to statements of the state officials, this association is unique in bringing together men from many communities near to Clear Lake and uniting the diverse elements of Conservation Commission, cottagers, fishermen, hunters, and those more particularly interested operators of motor boats for pleasure and profit and a fleet of sail boats in the commercial side of resort activity.

We do our fighting among ourselves—and do not think that meetings of the association are always peace and joy—but after a decision has been reached, the entire group carries on to the determined goal regardless of former internecine strife.

The difference of opinion as to the preservation of reed beds along portions of the lake shore, advantageous as spawning grounds and deemed desirable by fishing enthusiasts, but disadvantageous to cottage owners, is one of the unsettled problems which comes before the association at almost every meeting. Considerable effort has been made to remove enough of water vegetation to prevent interference with navigation while leaving sufficient amount for fish food and this likewise is a matter of never-ending argument.

#### ALL YEAR ACTIVITY MAINTAINED

Twice a year, once at Clear Lake in the spring and once at Mason City in the fall or winter, the officers and committeemen gather for a dinner and business

meeting to discuss things accomplished and things to be done for the benefit of Clear Lake. After an old-fashioned meal which puts everyone in good humor, reports from the committees are received and discussed pro and con and at last agreement is reached after which the group maintains a united front. Usually experts report on what they are doing for the benefit of recreationists and sportsmen in Iowa with particular reference to our local interests and the meeting adjourns with renewed enthusiasm for Iowa as the greatest agricultural state as well as a sportsman's paradise. These gatherings do much to determine what we want and what we can expect to get for the preservation of Clear Lake during the months and years to come.

During the years since its incorporation, the association has had as its presidents, Dr. G. A. Bemis, E. H. Wagner, Dr. E. H. Krueger, and Charles E. Cornwell, and during the greater part of the time, L. A. Page has served as secretary. These men have directed the policies of the association, but a host of others have given freely of their time and energy in service on committees of all sorts. Dr. G. A. Bemis, its first president, did a mighty fine job as organizer, but no more than Sid Halford in directing annual parties for "Visiting Firemen."

Dr. Krueger's administration brought "McIntosh Woods" into being, but Charlie Strickland, Clarence Knutson, and Harvey Bryant were the committee that negotiated with the owners and the State of Iowa to make possible its purchase.

Charlie Cornwell has been a fine executive, and we also remember how Lawrence Bless and Theo. Wolfram, with the marvelous assistance of their wives and friends, made the entertainment of various governors at the Wolfram home in Ventura overlooking the head of the lake so successful that even now one smiles and gently pats his lower chest in happy memory of those auspicious occasions.



While Louis Page guarded against raids on the treasury, we cannot forget the efforts of a host of workers who sold memberships to men all over the state and the middle west, making possible the effective work of the organization.

Everyone in this unique association has done his part without hope of dividends, salaries, or bonuses save the good times, experiences and the friendships established and maintained, and the knowledge of worthwhile accomplishments in the cause of conservation.

While at times the important sounding name of this organization, coupled with its many social activities, have been the subjects of jest and banter, still we, who have been its active proponents, feel that its efforts for the preservation of Clear Lake as one of Iowa's easily accessible beauty spots and recreational centers, have justified its existence and our endeavors.

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### BOUGHT ANOTHER "GOD'S ACRE"

Iowa land as an endowment was regarded as good in 1855. The *Valley Whig* related how Bishop Lee was then on a tour of eastern cities to raise money to buy a tract of Iowa land, and "an incident occurred after a lecture of his in Boston which white folks might imitate to advantage. It is related that a poor old colored woman who had listened to the bishop's appeal followed him into the vestry room, after the services were over, and presented him with a dollar and a quarter to buy an acre of ground in Iowa to be devoted to the services of Almighty God."

# ANNALS IOWA

## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

### THE IOWA STAMP



An Iowa Centennial celebration postage stamp has greatly added to the general interest in Iowa and elsewhere over the first one hundred years of statehood. The initiative for this was taken by Iowa members of congress, and their appeal to the post office department was buttressed by a resolution of the Iowa General Assembly early in 1945 which brought forth results. In the autumn the post office department asked for suggestions for a stamp design and the Department of History and Archives had prepared and forwarded several such tentative designs. A flood of other suggestions followed, and the Centennial committee gave valuable co-operation.

A design was adopted which, while not as impressive as others proposed, met with general approval. The stamp has a miniature map of Iowa with the Iowa banner and

decorative ornaments of corn stalks. The stamp was placed on sale at Iowa City, where statehood was started, on the anniversary of the day that the voters of Iowa territory approved the first state constitution.

The Iowa delegation in Congress also secured passage of a special act to authorize the minting of an Iowa coin.

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## IOWA ENGAGES IN CELEBRATING

We all love to celebrate. Good fellowship is promoted by reunions, jubilees, conventions and all sorts of get-together programs. Iowa people have taken advantage of the advent of their first Centennial year of statehood to make known to the world their just pride in a century of achievement. At the present time, in the very hottest days of an ideal corn-growing year, as we move on to a bounteous harvest, Iowa is advertising to the world our great glory, with long parades, stirring music, appropriately decorated vehicles, window dressing, newspaper and radio shouting and bringing out of dusty closets the faded memories of a glorious past.

A full week of merriment and memory searching, ending on the Fourth of July, set the pace at the capital city; and this was followed by a hundred similar celebrations in other Iowa cities and towns, and in schools, clubs and fairs. When the score is checked over it will be found that results have exceeded all expectations. The first state fair after four years of war vacation emphasized the Centennial idea by a wonderful exhibit of tools, pioneer vehicles and implements both attractive and educational. Newspapers published many special editions that were of very high order.

The general idea expressed in the legislative resolution of 1941 for "celebration to be of a character suitable to advance the educational and historical interest of the people of the state in the development of our State in its first hundred years" is being closely adhered to. If the whole program of the Centennial celebration does

nothing more than to stimulate the fine community spirit of all the state it will be worth much more than the cost. Anyway Father Iowa is wiping the sweat from his brow and shouting louder than ever before.

The Iowa Centennial committee appointed by Gov. Robert D. Blue consisted of the following persons:

Lester Milligan, Mason City; Mrs. Robert Pike, Sioux City, Mrs. Myrtle Fellinghom, Council Bluffs; Hugo Saggau, Denison; Homer Stephens, Clarinda; Mrs. R. R. Roberts, Britt; Bert Stolpe, Des Moines; John W. Gannaway, Grinnell; Mrs. Dwight S. Humeston, Albia; William J. Petersen, Iowa City; Ross Burman, Burlington; Mrs. F. P. Gernand, Volga; E. W. Williams, Manchester; Ralph Evans, Davenport; J. N. Darling, Des Moines; F. E. Sheldon, Mt. Ayr; Lloyd Cunningham, Des Moines; Ethyl Martin, Iowa City; Ora Williams, Des Moines; Jessie M. Parker, Des Moines; John P. Mullen, Fonda; Rodney Q. Selby, Des Moines.

The committee organized early in the year with Mr. Milligan as chairman, and employed Mrs. Edith W. McElroy as secretary in charge of headquarters opened in the state house. The intensive drive to bring out into the open everything that would contribute to the main purpose and to make the celebration statewide and continuous through the year, brought enthusiastic co-operation from every source, with excellent results. The general assembly had made a small appropriation, growing out of the resolution that had been prepared by the curator of the State Department of History, and this was supplemented by further funds by the legislative committee on retrenchment and reform out of emergency funds.

In the State Department of History and Archives the Centennial year brought many opportunities for additional service. From all parts of the state came requests for books, pamphlets, manuscripts, addresses, photographs and special search for historical facts. The whole state, as long had been anticipated, eagerly turned from counting the costs of war to reckoning the value of the years of peaceful development.



## NOTABLE DEATHS

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ROBERT J. SHAW, lawyer, soldier and instructor, died in an army hospital in Munich, Germany, August 2, 1946, from an illness first experienced June 30 this year; born in Chicago, Illinois, May 13, 1891; removed to Iowa and graduated from the Sigourney high school in 1909, from the State University of Iowa in 1916, and received his law degree from Northwestern University in Chicago in 1921; served as Keokuk county attorney from 1923 to 1927; continued in the practice of law there and operated a stock farm near Sigourney until 1940 when he came to Des Moines to serve upon the state selective service board; in World War I was a first lieutenant in France, and returning taught military science and tactics at Coe College, at Cedar Rapids for a year; for eleven consecutive years was either chairman or secretary of the national defense section of the national American Legion convention; was state commander of the American Legion in 1940, and a former president of the Reserve Officers association for the seventh service command; entered the service in World War II and attained the rank of lieutenant colonel; after Pearl Harbor requested transfer to the ground forces; got it in February, 1942; and went overseas Feb. 5, 1943; crossed four enemy defense lines in combat—the Gustav, Hitler and Gothic in Italy, and the Siegfried in Germany; went uninjured through fighting in Tunisia, Algeria, Italy and France, and was at the front before Cassino, Italy, for 93 days; there received the combat infantry man's badge he wore at the top of three rows of World War I and II service ribbons; also had the French Croix de Guerre, and the Brazilian Order of Military Merit; had been assigned to duty in Germany in the prosecution of Nazi war criminals, where he had expected to remain for two years, when illness overtook him in June last.

Mrs. Shaw and Robert, jr., a son, who have resided in Des Moines, were flown to Germany by Atlantic air transport when the colonel was stricken with a coronary thrombosis and were with him when he died. Also with him was his brother, Dr. William J. Shaw, of Missouri, a medical corps colonel who had been on duty in the Pacific theater, in charge of surgery with the 11th army corps, and who flew to Germany about 10 days ago. Colonel Shaw was exceedingly proud of his surgeon brother, and of him said some months ago: "Bill was the son-of-a-gun who administered blood to and saved old Tojo." A daughter, Mrs. Gordon L. Jones, resides in Indianapolis, Indiana.

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CLAUDE R. PORTER, legislator, soldier and public official, died at Washington, D. C., August 17, 1946; born at Moulton, Iowa, July

8, 1872, a son of lawyer George Porter and Hannah Porter and grandson of a Presbyterian minister; graduated from Centerville, Iowa, high school and attended Parsons college at Fairfield, Iowa, one year, and St. Louis law school one year; began practice of law at Centerville in 1893; served as sergeant-major of the 50th Iowa infantry in the Spanish-American war; a member of the Iowa house of representatives from 1896 to 1900, and of the Iowa senate from 1900 to 1904, being the youngest member of each house at the time of his service, only 23 when he was named to the house; a member of the investigating committee that recommended the board of control system for management of state institutions; from 1914 to 1918 served as United States attorney for southern district of Iowa; became special assistant U. S. attorney general and later assistant attorney general in charge of criminal prosecutions; next was chief counsel of the federal trade commission, and later special counsel of that commission; unsuccessful Democratic candidate for secretary of state of Iowa in 1898, three times a Democratic candidate for governor and five times for United States senator, in none which was he successful; first appointed member of the interstate commerce commission by President Coolidge in 1928, to fill a vacancy, and reappointed by Coolidge in December following for term expiring in 1935; served as chairman of the commission and reappointed by President Roosevelt for term expiring in 1949.

Senator Porter's death was occasioned by a cerebral hemorrhage two days previous, and subsequent to receiving word of the death of his 45-year-old son, George B. Porter, a Washington, D. C. attorney, the Sunday night previous at a hotel in San Francisco, who choked on a piece of food found lodged in his windpipe. He is survived by his wife, the former Maude Boutin of Cape Girardeau, Mo., whom he married in 1899, by four married daughters and ten grand children; was active in the Centerville and Des Moines Presbyterian churches; thirty-two years ago organized at Centerville the Porter bible class which is still active; an aggressive foe of the liquor industry in Iowa; always a man of great zeal in the causes he advocated and held the confidence of those who knew him through a long and creditable public service.

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WALTER A. SHAEFFER, manufacturer, died at his home, "High Point," at Fort Madison, Iowa, June 19, 1946; born at Bloomfield, Iowa, July 27, 1867, son of Jacob Royer and Anna Eliza Walton Sheaffer, educated in the Bloomfield public schools. After employment in jewelry stores at Centerville, Iowa, and Unionville, Missouri, returned to Bloomfield to become a partner in his father's jewelry and music store; opened his own store in 1906 and

quickly began making fountain pens, incorporating the idea he had long toyed with, of placing an eye-dropper rubber tube in pens to retain a quantity of ink and lessen the inconvenience of frequent filling of the pen. He purchased a jewelry store in Fort Madison and soon seven employees were assisting him manufacture the pens, resulting in the organization of the Sheaffer Pen Company in 1913, with an original capital of \$35,000.

He married Nellie Davis at Pulaski, Iowa, February 8, 1888, since deceased. They were parents of two children, Clementine, now Mrs. Harry Waldron, of Fort Madison, and Craig Royer Sheaffer, of Fort Madison; and in 1928 he married Mrs. Jean Lawrence, who survives. Through the years his business expanded into million dollar proportions, with two plants at Fort Madison, factories also at Toronto, Canada; Mount Pleasant, Iowa; Quincy, Illinois; and is internationally known in the manufacture of a wide range of pens, mechanical pencils, desk sets and writing fluid.

At the time of his death he was chairman of the board of directors of the corporation, and his son, Craig, president and general manager; he was a member of the United Presbyterian church, the Masonic order, Elks, Rotary and a Republican. His industrial genius led him to high places in Iowa and national manufacturers circles; and for many years he had paid liberal bonuses to over 1,100 persons long with the company, his profit-sharing plan dividing earnings of the business between stockholders and employees, prior to any agitation for such procedure in national labor and employment circles.

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LOUIS PELZER, educator, author, historian, died at Iowa City, Iowa, June 28, 1946; born at Griswold, Iowa, February 4, 1879, the son of Henry and Sophia Pelzer; graduated from Iowa State Teachers' college in 1901, received a Ph.B degree from the University of Iowa in the same year and a Ph.D in 1909; after serving as teacher and principal of several Iowa high schools, joined the state university staff in 1911 as an assistant professor; as an associate professor following 1917, he was elevated to full professorship in 1925.

Dr. Pelzer married Mildred Lenore Weenick at Dillon, Montana, January 1, 1917, who survives him; two sons, Lieut. Loren Parker Pelzer, killed in the navy air force in California in 1943, and Lieut. Henry Pelzer, killed in the European war area in 1945, preceded him in death. Since 1941 Professor Pelzer has been editor of the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, an outstanding historical journal; served as secretary of the Big Ten athletic conference in 1927-29 and member of the Iowa Territorial Cen-

ennial committee in 1938; vice president of the Mississippi Valley Historical association in 1936, and was vice president of the American Association of American University professors at the time of his death; also a member of the American Historical association, the Iowa City Research club, the Triangle club and the Presbyterian church.

He was author of "Augustus Caesar Dodge," 1907; "Henry Dodge," 1911; "Marches of the Dragoons in the Mississippi Valley," 1917; "Cattleman's Frontier," 1936; and "Prairie Logbooks," 1943.

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RANDOLPH S. BEALL, publisher and business man, died at Mount Ayr, Iowa, June 2, 1946, where he was born February 13, 1864; a son of Ithamar S. and Charlotte Swan Beall, the last of the original family of that name which came to Iowa from Ohio in the early fifties; his entire life spent in the community where his mother was a pioneer teacher in the local schools; a studious, purposeful man with a love for literature, history and books, owning an extensive private library; educated in the Mount Ayr schools; informed and active in educational and community affairs; married August 25, 1904, to Martha Stahl, of the faculty of Simpson college, Indianola, who served as a trustee of that institution a number of years and corresponding secretary for the Women's Foreign Missionary society and passed away January 8, 1933. Although in late years Mr. Beall engaged in the real estate and insurance business, his most active years were spent in newspaper work, first the associate of his brother, the late Walter Beall, in the publication of the *Mount Ayr Twice-A-Week News* until 1907 when it was merged with the *Mount Ayr Record*; in later years established the *Ringgold County Bulletin*; assisted in founding the Ringgold County Historical society and establishing the annual Ringolder Reunion; a member of the Methodist Episcopal church for over three-quarters of a century; active in the Sunday school work and as a member of the board of trustees of the church.

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EARL G. MILLER, public official, died in Des Moines, Iowa, July 21, 1946; born in Carlisle, Warren county, Iowa, January 31, 1888, his mother dying when he was five years old; was raised by his grandmother, a native of France; came to Des Moines in 1898; educated in Des Moines schools and sold newspapers on the down-town streets; attended Chicago University of Applied Science; conducted a furniture business in Des Moines; elected Secretary of State of Iowa in 1938; became a candidate for governor in 1942 and was defeated in the Republican primary by Lt. Gov. Bourke B. Hickenlooper; was again nominated for office



of Secretary of State in the 1946 Republican primary, but his passing away required another nomination a week later by the Republican state convention to fill the vacancy upon the state ticket; was a member of Masonic bodies, the Odd Fellows, the Moose, the Elks, Norden Singers, and Conopus-Exchange club; was married to Ruby West of Kellogg January 9, 1924, who survives him.

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THOMAS L. CURRAN, veterinarian, soldier and public official, died at Ottumwa, Iowa, August 27, 1946; born in Ottumwa February 27, 1883, the son of Dennis and Ellen Curran; educated in the rural and parochial schools and St. Joseph College, St. Joseph, Missouri, where he received a degree in veterinary medicine; practiced as a veterinarian; widely traveled and served with the U. S. department of interior as agricultural instructor; also as adviser in animal industry two years to Vincent Gomez, president of Venezuela, Central America; served with Troop "G" United States cavalry, also with General John Pershing in the Philippines for three years during the Moro uprising, and in Europe during World War I; elected secretary of agriculture in Iowa in 1936 with the Democratic administration; a charter member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars post at Ottumwa, a member of the General Shields council, Knights of Columbus, of St. Mary's Catholic church and the Holy Name society there; since 1944 had lived near Silver City, New Mexico, where he was interested in gold mining, and became an unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic nomination for congress; had been residing in Kansas City since returning from the west several months previous to his death; survived by two sisters and a niece, and was preceded in death by his parents and four brothers. He was not married.

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JOHN L. WILSON, SR., farmer and legislator, died at his home in Clinton, Iowa, August 31, 1946; born in Elk township near Almont, in Clinton county, Iowa, October 25, 1857, son of Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Wilson, who were early Iowa pioneers from Pennsylvania; educated in the rural schools and business college at Clinton, graduating in 1876; his life-long occupation being that of farming; married Susie E. Cook on December 15, 1880, and resided on the old Wilson farm until retirement in 1916, when they removed to Clinton; served as state representative in 1893 and re-elected in 1895; elected as senator in 1897 and remained in the senate until 1914, his legislative tenure extending through eleven successive sessions; a member of the Masonic bodies, president of the Clinton county old settlers association and a Democrat.





